

LONDON IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

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LONDON BRIDGE
(From Hollar's View, 1647)

LONDON IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

By

PERCY H. BOYNTON



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PREFACE

English literature embraces, as no one realizes better than I, a vast and complicated body of material. To make a part of this in some degree more intelligible is the purpose of the present volume. It is not addressed primarily to scholars. It has been written for students and readers who enjoy literature the better as they more clearly understand its original setting. Nothing is included in the volume which cannot be easily traced by reference to standard works on London and obvious sources in literature. It happens, however, that, in all the array of studies about the great city, none has been produced with the purposes of the present book: to give an idea of London atmosphere in the various literary periods, to expound the chief places of interest for successive generations, and to make a reasonably generous selection from old and new engravings and photographs. Those who care to follow up any of my findings may be aided by the footnotes, the lists of illustrative readings appended to the chapters, the appendix on illustrative novels, and the index, in which account is taken of these data as well as of the text. To one who pursues any of the devious

paths blazed by these cumbrous tools, pleasant vistas will open out which lead far from the main highroad. And perhaps some student, thus beguiled, will one day complete on an ample scale a book for which the present volume hardly more than suggests a working method.

P. H. B.

CHICAGO
February, 1913

ILLUSTRATIVE READINGS

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CHAPTER I

CHAUCER'S LONDON

The history of such a city as London is invariably connected with the literature produced in it. Yet allusions with which literature is filled are not always clear to the average and to the casual reader, for the background against which poetry, drama, essays, and fiction have been written is a continually shifting one.

The chapters to follow are successively connected, for instance, with Chaucer's fourteenth century, with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as Shakespeare crossed the border line between them, with The Commonwealth and The Restoration as seen in Milton and Dryden, with two periods in the eighteenth century as witnessed by Addison and Goldsmith, with three in the nineteenth as seen by Lamb, Dickens, and George Eliot, and with the contemporary London of the twentieth century.

Here is a succession of periods each of which discovers London in a different spiritual stage, the whole tracing the community from the days of mediaevalism through the Renaissance, the

vigorous reaction of Puritanism, the early rationalism of the eighteenth century, the rise of a new spirit of freedom and democracy, and the successive and vital changes of the last hundred years; and here, too, is a little procession of men every one of whom sees these changing phenomena not only from the point of view of his own generation but with the prejudices which belong to his own individual nature. Each chapter, therefore, involves a partial point of view and a transitory, evanescent London.

Yet the successive excursions are not quite aimless, for each one of them is directed to a series of visible places and buildings which are associated with picturesque episodes from the past. Moreover, although the same ground is frequently retraced, all have to do with an enlarging metropolis. Thus, the mediaeval walled town of Chaucer's day is succeeded in interest by the larger town of Shakespeare's, with its outlying theaters and its interesting highway to Westminster. Thus, the coffee-houses of Addison's time, the great business establishments of Lamb's, and the law courts and houses of Parliament of Dickens' day are all features of a growing city which in the end has become the vast and complicated London of the present, over a hundred times

the area of the original little town with which we are to begin.

It was located in the most unpromising of sites:

Imagine a Mediterranean trireme here—the very end of the world, a sea the colour of lead, a sky the colour of smoke, a kind of ship as rigid as a concertina—and going up this river with stores, or orders, or what you like. Sand-banks, marshes, forests, savages—precious little to eat fit for a civilized man, nothing but Thames water to drink. No Falernian wine here, no going ashore. Here and there a military camp lost in a wilderness, like a needle in a bundle of hay—cold, fog, tempests, disease, exile, and death—death skulking in the air, in the water, in the bush. They must have been dying like flies here. . . . Or think of a decent young citizen in a toga—perhaps too much dice, you know—coming out here in the train of some prefect, or tax-gatherer, or trader even, to mend his fortunes. Land in a swamp, march through the woods, and in some island post feel the savagery, the utter savagery, that had closed around him—all that mysterious life of the wilderness that stirs in the forest, in the jungles, in the hearts of wild men.¹

The London of Chaucer's day was a full-fledged city with a long history behind it. For more than a thousand years before Chaucer's birth, on the spot where London now stands, the old city, or rather a succession of cities, had stood—an early British community, a Roman

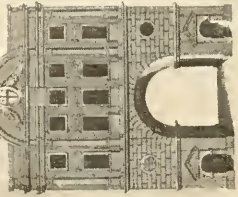
¹Joseph Conrad, *Youth: A Narrative*, pp. 56, 57.

London, a deserted collection of moldering ruins, a Saxon London repeatedly occupied by the Danes, and a Norman London. From the time of the Conquest on, while the unity of the city as the metropolis of England was undisturbed, it may be said that physically three Londons have been erected, the dividing lines being the great fires of 1135 and of 1666. Both of these swept the heart of the old community and that part of the modern one which is technically known as "The City." Each was followed by a complete rebuilding which left many of the old thoroughfares, but completely transformed the look of the town. It was the second of these Londons—the one existing during the half-millennium between the middle of the twelfth and the middle of the seventeenth centuries—in which Chaucer lived from 1340 to 1400.

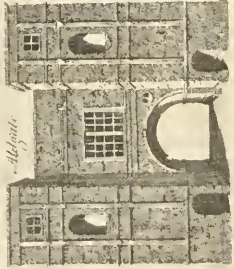
This London was a little, unimposing town of which one can get a much better idea today by visiting such places as Canterbury or Oxford than by spending a casual week in the present enormous metropolis on the Thames. Its population was probably under 40,000. It extended about a mile along the north bank of the river and a half-mile back into the country; and even within these limits it was not solidly built up. It was com-

The CITY GATES as they appeared before they were pulled down.

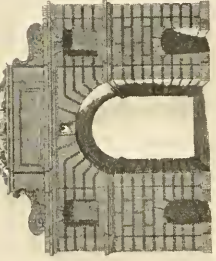
Moorgate



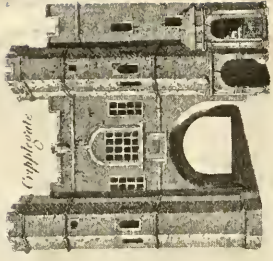
Aldgate



Bishopsgate



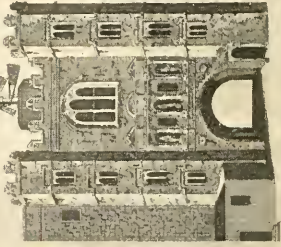
Cripplegate



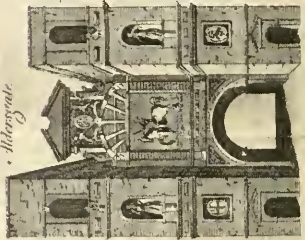
Ludgate



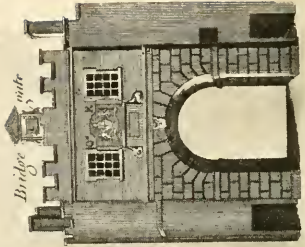
Newgate



Aldersgate



Bridgegate



Moorgate, demolished 1762
Ludgate, demolished 1760

Aldgate, 1761
Newgate, 1767

Bishopsgate, cir. 1763
Aldersgate, 1761

Cripplegate, 1760
Bridgegate, 1577

EIGHT OLD GATES SACRIFICED TO MAKE WAY FOR TRAFFIC

pletely surrounded by a wall, which on the land sides was supplemented by what had formerly been a wide and deep moat. The south portion, of course, lay directly on the river front. At the eastern end of this was the Tower, a royal and imposing castle, nobly preserved in its main features at the present time. From here the wall circled about to the northwest, punctuated by a succession of entrances, Aldgate, Bishopsgate, Moorgate, Cripplegate, and Aldersgate. At Smithfield (the old cattle market just outside the city, half a mile back from the Thames and rather more than that distance upstream from the Tower) the wall turned south by Newgate and Ludgate, past St. Paul's Cathedral to Blackfriars, the great Dominican monastery; and thus back to the river.

The wall itself was a sturdy pile, of which the modern traveler can get an adequate notion from the fine remains at Chester, or from some of the survivors on the Continent, such as, for instance, the almost complete one around Nuremburg. Only two fragments are still easily to be seen in London.¹ The gate towers, massive structures, were part dwellings and part prisons. Above Aldgate for some years lived no less a personage than Chaucer himself. Most famous of all was

¹ See chap. x, p. 273, and illustration opposite.

Newgate, the chief prison, and scene of many a notable execution.

The "best people" had possession, for the most part, of the westerly portion of the city, which the west winds freed from dust and smoke. Here certain streets even in these early days extended outside the wall, Fleet Street and the Strand reaching to Charing Cross in the midst of the open fields. Next, hard on the river, which made a sharp bend toward the south, came the town house of the archbishops of York (which was later to be conveyed to Henry VIII upon the disgrace of Wolsey and converted into the royal residence, Whitehall); and then Westminster, a separate community containing both the Abbey and the Parliament buildings. At Westminster boats could carry pedestrians across to the suburb, Southwark, which, except by water, was to be reached only over London Bridge a mile to the east.

As a traveler came up from Canterbury way, or, in fact, from anywhere south of the Thames, he naturally entered the city by means of this, the only bridge; for it was nearly three hundred years after Chaucer's day when, in 1760, a second was built. The old bridge was a whole generation in erection (1176-1209), but it did duty for five full

centuries. Could it have survived to the present day, no single spectacle in London would now surpass it in interest. It was set on a score of stone arches of various lengths, and was intercepted about a third of the way across by a draw-bridge which marked the county line between Middlesex and Surrey. Like all mediaeval structures of slow growth, it was not irrevocably committed to a final plan before the first stone was laid, with the result that its history tells of a steady succession of changes. In its comparative youth of less than two hundred years when Chaucer was alive, it seems according to Stow, the antiquarian, not to have been "replenished with houses builded thereupon, as since it hath beene, and now is." Yet from the outset it was graced in mid-stream by a chapel dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury, and for the last half of its life it sturdily upheld two almost unbroken lines of shops and dwellings, together with the high towers at either end on which traitors' heads were displayed after execution. London Bridge as a name was far from telling the whole story. It was also a stronghold, a thoroughfare, and a business street; a monument to travel, commerce, law, and the church.

Of all the London sights of the fourteenth

century which have since been swept away there was only one that rivaled the Bridge. This was old St. Paul's Cathedral. Like the city itself, it had risen and fallen more than once. The great structure which towered over London in the days of Henry V—begun in 1087, and about two hundred years in building—was completed hardly more than half a century before Chaucer's birth. It was a superb and enormous creation. The St. Paul's of today is the biggest thing in London; with the slight advantage of its position on Ludgate Hill it easily dominates the great city in the center of which it grimly rears its head; but Old St. Paul's was just about a hundred feet longer and a hundred feet taller than the present huge pile. It was far more beautiful to the eye; and it could be better seen, for it was in a smaller city and a city of smaller buildings. We have no good view of London which displays the cathedral in the years of its greatest glory; but even in the drawings made after the steeple had burned in 1444 the great structure brooded over the town like Gibraltar at the meeting of the two seas.

Under the shadow of St. Paul's lay an irregular network of narrow streets, all but a dozen of them terminating within the city walls. The great parade ground, Cheapside, extended for a



OLD ST. PAUL'S
(From Hollar's View, 1647)

quarter of a mile east of St. Paul's Churchyard. Wide enough for the "boast of heraldry, the pomp of power," it became the natural thoroughfare for all the processions between London Tower and Westminster, the swing back from the river being taken here on account of the ampler size of the street. Along its sides were erected, not only scores of modest shops with a plentiful intersprinkling of taverns either on Cheapside or on the cross streets, but also certain very notable buildings dedicated to the trade of the city. It was wide enough to afford an open market-place for the dealers in "bread, cheese, poultry, fruit, hides and skins, onions and garlic, and all other small victuals," who had no regular shops, and to contain, besides, four important structures in the middle of the street. At the east and west ends were the Great and Little conduits, where the people of the entire neighborhood drew their water, either in person or through the aid of carriers. Near the west end was the Standard of Cheap, a fountain before which for centuries public punishments were meted out. The list of penalties is a grim one, running from executions and mutilations to exposure in the pillory and the public burning of dishonest merchandise and seditious books. Near the east end was Cheapside Cross,

the eleventh of the twelve crosses (Charing Cross was the last) marking the resting-places of the body of Queen Eleanor when it was brought from Hardeby to Westminster Abbey in 1290. The whole atmosphere of the thoroughfare was spacious and ample; but on either side where the homelier things were sold, and where the craftsman lived and wrought, extended north and south little alley-like passages—Friday, Bread, Milk, Wood streets, Gutter Lane, and the like.

They were roughly paved with large stones. The one gutter or kennel was in the middle of the street, and it was seldom dry. As it served for a common drain, the pedestrian was in imminent danger of a drenching from the windows above. Nor was the refuse wholly liquid. Garbage and offal, and all the thousand and one odds and ends cast aside by the makers of useful things were shuffled into the streets. There were laws against abuses of this custom, and also laws that fires should from time to time be lighted to purify the air made noisome by infractions of the first set of rules. In June and July, on the vigils of festival days, there were special bonfires; and good need of them there must have been in Stinking Lane, Scalding Lane, Seething Lane, and Shere Hog.

In these days there were no factory districts

segregated at the outskirts of the town. Square through the heart of the city men were rattling looms, hammering metal and wood, grinding corn, brewing beer, and making tallow, soap, and glue. All the while the apprentices at the shop doors were calling and bawling their masters' wares, and over the roofs, but still beneath "the richly con-fected cloud of thick and heavy smell," were peal-ing the bells from most of the six-score church spires.¹

The shops and humble dwellings—usually com-bined—were little houses of wood. So recently as the thirteenth century there had been fire-legislation prohibiting the use of reeds, rushes, stubble, or straw in the roofs. The upper stories, projecting somewhat, darkened the narrow streets from which none too much light could enter the still narrower windows: and in stormy weather the gloom was increased by the lack of glazing and the need of closing the wooden shutters which

¹ In this connection the interesting nursery rhyme is pertinent:

"Oranges and lemons" say the bells of St. Clements;

"You owe me five farthings" say the bells of St. Martin's;

"When will you pay me?" say the bells of Old Bailey;

"When I grow rich" say the bells of Shoreditch;

"When will that be?" say the bells of Stepney;

"I do not know" says the great bell of Bow;

Here comes a candle to light you to bed,

And here comes a chopper to chop off your head.

were generally used. Here and there about the city, along the river front and on the main highways, were the castles of the mighty—twenty, thirty, forty of them—great establishments built around courtyards, with high banqueting-halls, council chambers, even throne-rooms, extensive enough to house hundreds of retainers. No less impressive and even more numerous were the properties of the church and churchmen—the cathedral, the monasteries, the nunneries, hospitals, colleges, and churches—holdings which represented enormous wealth and occupied one-fourth the acreage of all London.

The city was, moreover, not unprepared for strangers. In addition to the ordinary drinking-taverns, there were several popular inns. Of these the Tabard, at the end of London Bridge in Southwark, was a representative. By its position it caught much of the south-country custom. Here, naturally, the Canterbury-bound pilgrims gathered on the evening before they started to the shrine of Thomas à Becket. It was a comfortable hostelry, typical of the best that London had to offer. A wide gate opened from the street into a roomy courtyard overhung by balconies from which the sleeping-rooms could be reached. The cooking and serving of meals were

done in liberal fashion. The dinner hour was a time not so much for social intercourse as for the stowing-away of food. Chaucer and his friends drank their soup, cut their fowl and roasts with their own knives from the supply on the serving-dish, ate without forks, dipped their meat into the gravy bowl, and helped themselves to whatever they wanted, provided they could reach it. There was no touch of irony—as the modern reader is in danger of thinking—in Chaucer's description of the charming table manners of the Prioress:

At mete well y-taught was she with alle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe;
Wel koude she carie a morsel and wel kepe
That no drope ne felle upon hire brest;
In curteisie was set ful muchel hir lest.
Hire ouer lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
Of grece, when she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte.¹

Volumes have been written about the mere material city. These few facts are the common-places to be found in most London books from Stow to Baedeker. To the literary student, however, the nature and the conduct of the people

¹ See Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, ll. 127-36.

are of more interest than a severe enumeration of streets and buildings. The fourteenth century was a momentous one for all England. The progressive changes that are always occurring in any virile community were making for a national unity more compact and complete than ever before; for, through the rise of the common laborer in the field and in the shop, England in the age of Chaucer and Langland was taking great and spectacular strides toward democracy of feeling. To this end there were many contributing factors. Not the least was the achievement of a common language, what we now call English at last gaining the ascendancy not only among the Saxons, who had held to it ever since the Conquest, but at court, in Parliament, in the schools, and in polite literature as well. Only a little less important was the national rejoicing in common victories over a common enemy, the triumphs at Crécy and Poitiers, developing the fresh patriotism that comes with the heightened pulse-beat provoked by common exultation. Not even the martial decay under the later years of Edward III and Henry IV could wholly have counteracted this fine exhilaration of the mid-century. Moreover, one is tempted to say, even in default of abundant record, that England was drawn closer together

through common sorrow; for the succession of plagues which swept the island throughout the middle third of the century had left no heart untouched.

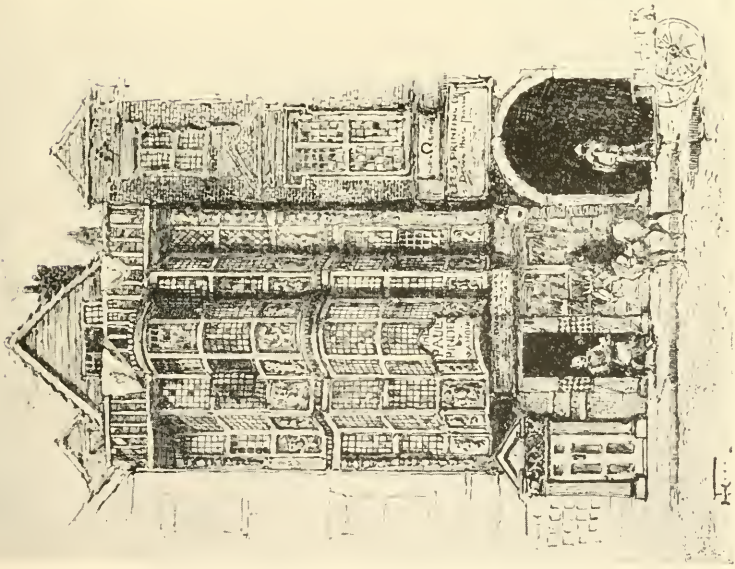
It is not hard to find in the backgrounds of the literature many concrete and picturesque evidences of all this. There are plenty of opportunities for observing at once the decline of the old order and the rise of the new—on the one hand, the passing of chivalry and the decay of the established church, and on the other the rise of the tradesman, the artisan, and the laborer. The strict and unrelieved chronicle of these developments is history; but abundant use of them is made in the literature of the day.

A completer title for this chapter would have been "The London of Langland and Chaucer." The composite picture of the city which each of them knew and portrayed was a partial picture, of course. The great social institutions of his generation Chaucer was inclined to take for granted. A lover of things beautiful, he was pre-eminently a story-teller, and incidentally a critic. In his eyes the characters he presented were first, last, and always individuals, who could interest and amuse, but seldom stir him to indignation. Very much after the fashion of Thackeray, if he had ideas as

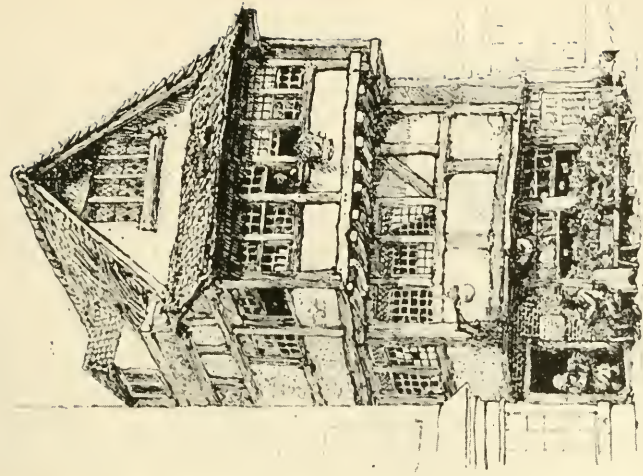
to public affairs, he kept them to himself when he took his pen in hand. The attitude of Carlyle was more nearly approximated in Langland, who pictured the same people from a different point of view.

Chaucer, like Thackeray, saw life in terms of his own experience. In its general aspects it was properly organized. It was conducted for the benefit of the upper or better classes. In the background, but only there, moved the great concourse of the obscure. Langland, like Dickens or Carlyle, on the other hand, gave these people the center of his picture. It was a street scene crowded and suppressed and made the more vivid by lights from high windows and the sound of laughter and revelry from within. Moreover, with all his soberness, Langland, again like Dickens and Carlyle, was throwing his influence only for a change in the existing order of things, working for the conversion of his country-wide parish and not for a revolution—even a peaceful one.

The formative period in Chaucer's life, and his whole subsequent career, account for the attitude toward life which he, doubtless unconsciously, assumed. He was born about 1340, the son of a London wine merchant, and spent the most of his



FRONT OF SIR PAUL PINDAR'S HOUSE
On the west side of Bishopsgate street without



OLD FOUNTAIN INN IN THE MINORIES
Taken down in 1793

(From an old print)

life in the city. At sixteen he was a page; at nineteen a soldier in France—and not a paper soldier either, for he was imprisoned, and ransomed by the King. Subsequently he is recorded as serving man to Edward III, squire, and shield-bearer. Seven times he was King's Commissioner on diplomatic errands to the Continent, three times at least going to Italy. He was a Controller of the Customs in 1374, Controller of the Petty Customs eight years later, a member of Parliament in 1386, a clerk of the Royal Works, and, toward the end of his life, Forester. When one recalls that he lived for some years over one of the chief gates of the city, one can see how uninterrupted and intimate must have been his acquaintance with the people at large. To complete his knowledge of England his long succession of offices in connection with King, Court, and Parliament was no less valuable.

Whatever the authorship of *The Vision of Piers the Plowman* may have been, the man (or men) who wrote this work, was schooled in the uses of adversity, and saw life from the viewpoint of the commoner rather than of the aristocrat. Such a man naturally does not find human relationships to be particularly amusing. He is too keenly aware of their distortions and of all the

avoidable suffering they cause. In every generation there has been at least one prophet to inquire as Jonathan Swift did of a friend if "the corruptions and villainies of men in power did not eat his flesh and exhaust his spirits." In such a mood did Piers behold his vision. What he professed to see was a progressive picture of all England, but as his own experience had made him familiar with England's greatest city, many of his backgrounds are adapted from it; and the sum of them is not a pleasant one. He himself was one of the poor for whom John Ball, Jack Straw, and Wat Tyler had contended. He had heard too much of the evils of prosperity to be a friend to it. The consequent reactions of these two men upon the chief elements in the social composition of London furnish a series of sharp contrasts.

It may have been out of a not unpleasing deference to their rank that in the catalogue of the *Canterbury Pilgrims* Chaucer first introduced the Knight and his son, the Squire. Chaucer described them with the friendly respect that one naturally pays to gentlemen of the old school. His own stories for the most part harked back to the days when knighthood was in flower. He was naturally interested in survivors of a picturesque institution, but he displayed no intimate

feeling for them. Chaucer's attitude was that of the privileged classes of his generation. Their imagination fondly reverted to the charming traditions of a world which was fading into the sunset mists. Continually they upheld in song and story the

Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie¹

which characterized the relations of knights and ladies, and both they and he politely ignored the poverty and oppression suffered by the masses upon whose backs the great superstructures of chivalry arose. Fancy could kindle at the campaigns, in Prussia and Russia, in Algiers, along the Mediterranean, and in Turkey, in which the "verray parfit gentil knight"² had participated, and could linger at the feasts where he had occupied the seat of honor. So, too, it could dwell on the joyous aspects of life as embodied in the Squire, the glass of fashion and the mold of form. In his love of song he was the courtly incarnation of lyric poetry; in his fondness for dress he was a delight to the eye of a nation that doted on mumblings and pageantries, appareled its Aldermen in "orient grained scarlet," and clothed its outlaw foresters in Lincoln green.

¹ Prologue, l. 46.

² *Ibid.*, l. 72.

Quite in contrast was Langland's treatment of the same narrative material. To him also the Knight stands for something that has passed; but he sees nothing to fascinate him in the glory of the days that have gone. Like Lowell,¹ four centuries later, he concludes that the ideal of manhood can justify itself only through the exercise of a love of mankind that transcends class distinction. Piers, discoursing to his pilgrims, says:

"Take heed how the needy and the naked lie, and devise clothes for them, for so Truth commandeth. For I will give them their livelihood, unless the land fail, flesh and bread both for rich and poor as long as I live, for the Lord of Heaven is love. And all manner of men who live by meat and drink, keep them to work busily who win your food."

"By Christ," then said a knight, "he teacheth us the best, but about that matter truly I was never taught. But teach me," said the knight, "and, by Christ, I will try!"²

Thus encouraged, Piers turns from the group at large to this one new promising disciple, and instructs him, not how to become a laborer himself, but how to use his powers aright. He is to fight wickedness, to be guilty of no selfish

¹ See Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal."

² *Piers the Plowman* done into modern prose by Kate M. Warren (London, 1899), Passus VI, p. 90.

pleasures, to vex no tenant, and to ill-use no bondmen; and when he has heard the admonitions to an end, the Knight assents with a whole heart. "I will do according to thy words while my life lasteth."¹ Langland has no word to waste on the splendors of the tournament or the glamor of the Court of Love. He looks forward rather than back, and dreams of the new golden age when knighthood shall learn for the first time who are the helpless and afflicted and shall aspire to the beauty of holiness.

In the Canterbury Prologue, Knight and Squire are dismissed more or less by way of preface; and then comes the most important single group of all, the various individuals representing the church—a Monk, a Friar, a Nun and her three Priests, a Summoner, and a Pardoner, a Parson, and the Prioress to whom allusion has already been made. It was no accident that in Chaucer's enumeration of the Canterbury Pilgrims so large a proportion of them were churchmen, for the church was rich and powerful to a degree almost inconceivable if one tries to appreciate it in terms of present-day conditions. Chaucer's London was thoroughly church-ridden. The number of people dependent upon it was very great. John Stow in his *Survey*

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

of London has enumerated some of the staff of St. Paul's Cathedral, the largest foundation in the city. The society included the Bishop, the Dean, the five Archdeacons, the Treasurer, the Precentor, the Chancellor, thirty greater Canons, twelve lesser Canons, about fifty Chaplains, and thirty Vicars; and below these were a long list of inferior offices including "the four vergers, the twelve scribes, the singing men and the choir boys, and the sextons, grave-diggers, gardeners, menders and makers of the robes, cleaners, sweepers, carpenters, masons, painters, carvers, and guilders." When one considers that this list does not include any such representatives of the church as the Prioress, Monk, Friar, Pardoner, Summoner, and Priests in the roster of the Canterbury Pilgrims, one can see that Chaucer made only modest use of the opportunities afforded him by the church in the fourteenth century.

Chaucer's attitude toward this group is discriminating, with sharp criticism for those who deserve it and equal praise for those who had earned it. The great orders of traveling and mendicant monks—the Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, and Austins—had forgotten the ideals of simplicity and discipline in pursuit of which they had been founded, and partly through their own

selfishness, but partly through the misplaced enthusiasm of patrons who had dealt too lavishly with them, they had degenerated into enormously wealthy and self-indulgent groups. Therefore it is that the Monk is described as loving the hunt, fond of a good horse, neglectful of study, gorgeous in dress, and "full fat" as the result of his devotion to the table.

The abuses of the confessional, penance, absolution, and the ecclesiastical courts are, of course, in the history of the Reformation, commonplaces of which Chaucer had a vigorous word to say in connection with the Friar, Pardoner, and Summoner. The first was an "easy man to give penance," indulgent to sinners in direct ratio to their generosity with him. He was a noble beggar, but by no means beggarly in his dress or diet. But the others were worse; for ways that were dark in hypocrisy, flattery, chicanery, and downright viciousness, they were the blackest of black sheep in the company of pilgrims.

Yet Chaucer was careful not to overlook those who deserved his respect. The dainty but somewhat futile Prioress, well mannered, sentimental, and debonairly virtuous, was an amiable member of the group, and the poor Parson was a fine representative of the self-forgetful unworldliness

described, at least by implication, in Milton's "Lycidas"¹ and later still in Goldsmith's "Deserted Village."² Of his little he was free to give. There was no exertion that he would spare himself for the sake of one of his flock. He was more eager to be doing his work well where he was than to sublet his benefice and run to London "into Sainte Poules" in order to find for himself a better job there. Nor was he a hopelessly meek and gentle soul, for when occasion demanded he was capable of righteous indignation. If we had no other authority to go to we should gain from the Prologue what history shows to be a fair estimate of the fourteenth-century church, that as an institution it had fallen upon dark days; that then as in Milton's generation there were too many who had crept and intruded and climbed into the fold simply for what they could find to eat when they got there; that simple credulity made easy victims of the ignorant populace for the ecclesiastical "confidence men" who swarmed England as they did all Europe; but that here and there were to be found spirited and unambitious men of whom it could be said as it was of the poor Parson:

¹ See Milton, "Lycidas," ll. 113-31.

² See Goldsmith, "Deserted Village," ll. 141-92.

But Cristes loore and hise Apostles twelve
He taughte; but first he folwed it himselve.¹

Langland holds much the same picture up to view. At the opening of his Prologue he presents it. The tongues of pilgrims and palmers were "more tuned to lying than to telling the truth." Friars of the four Orders preached to the people for their own profit, and interpreted the Gospel as it seemed good to them. A Pardoner was shamelessly plying his trade. Parsons and parish priests were soliciting fat jobs in London. Bishops, already there, were so conducting themselves that "it is to be feared Christ at the last will curse full many of them in His Court."² Langland, saying the same things that Chaucer did, spoke more sternly, but he also went a step farther. To Piers, for his integrity and his honest service, he pronounced a pardon extending to his heirs forevermore; and to a whole class, who might have been parishioners to the poor Parson, he held out a living hope:

All laborers living who live honestly by their hands,
and live in love and under law, because of their lowly
hearts, shall have the same absolution that was sent to
Piers.³

¹ Prologue, ll. 527, 528.

² *Piers the Plowman*, tr. Warren, Prologue, p. 5.

³ *Ibid.*, Passus VII, p. 108.

The tribute to labor is paid by Chaucer as well as by Langland. Of the entire group of Canterbury Pilgrims none receives a higher tribute than does the Plowman, brother to the poor Parson. It was with a real appreciation of the dignity of the peasant that Chaucer wrote:

A trewe swinkere and a good was he,
Livinge in pees and parfit charitee.¹

Yet his comment on the peacefulness of the ideal laborer may have been stimulated by the fact that during his lifetime the farm workers had been an excited and turbulent lot. From the middle of the century when the ravages of the Black Plague had so disturbed the economy of the farming counties that stringent laws had been passed to hold labor in check, discontent upon the land had been steadily growing. It was not till 1381 that affairs reached a climax; but then the peasants gathered by thousands and scores of thousands, freed John Ball, "the mad priest," from his Canterbury imprisonment, flooded on toward London, putting to death all lawyer-stewards whom they captured, gained entrance to the city, and fired the palace of John of Gaunt and the Inn of the lawyers at the Temple. In London, joined by others from the north, they burst into the

¹ Prologue, ll. 531, 532.

Tower and seized Archbishop Sudbury and slew him. It was not till the young King Richard, crying, "I am your captain and your King; follow me!" had given them all letters of pardon and emancipation that they scattered to their homes. No mention of this episode by Chaucer or Langland; by Langland because the "B text" of the *Vision* was written too early, by Chaucer either because it did not interest him, or because allusions to it would not have been welcome to his noble and royal patrons.

The Peasant Revolt, in spite of its spectacular culmination, was followed by so strong a reaction that ultimate success did not arrive till long years later. When it did come it was the result of a general movement, of which the development of the craft and trade guilds was another manifestation. In general, this was a movement toward breaking down the powers of the hereditary rich. It would be simple and pleasant if one could say that it broke down the power of wealth and abolished class distinctions. It did not; for it gave new power to the merchant class because of their ability as a group to amass wealth. And again it did not; for the merchants set themselves off from the master-craftsmen, and the master-craftsmen from the journeymen, who in turn stood

above the apprentices. Yet in general the power of both craftsman and merchant had been developing more rapidly than that of the farmer.

Realizing the hopelessness of the individual, the workers in various handicrafts had through generations been organizing together. In the greater towns, their numbers were such that their powers had become by no means negligible. In different portions of London they had their segregated quarters—the haberdashers in one place, the goldsmiths in another, the drapers, the vintners, the ironmongers, and the dealers in various wares each in their own little district. Not content with merely gathering into neighborhoods, they were organizing themselves into permanent bodies, securing charters from the King, establishing standards of work and of pay, and achieving many fruits of close organization which the trades-unionist of today is apt to consider the result of nineteenth- and twentieth-century developments. So in the group of pilgrims Chaucer introduced the Haberdasher, Carpenter, Weaver, Dyer, and Upholsterer, commented on the sumptuous liveries they wore, and alluded to their eligibility to sit in councils of the city and to satisfy their wives' ambitions for social distinction.

Wel semed ech of hem a fair burgeys
To sitten in a yeldehalle on a deys.
Everich for the wisdom that he kan
Was shaply for to been an alderman.¹

Moreover, if the maker of things could aspire to be an alderman, the buyer and seller could hope to become Lord Mayor. Such was Richard Whittington for four terms during his honored career. Scientific history in its ruthless course has done away with the most picturesque features of the Whittington tradition. He did not spring from obscure parentage and almost leave the city in discouragement. It may be that he did not even have a cat; but he was a merchant prince and a Lord Mayor, and he did sit before kings and leave splendid benefactions to his fellow-citizens.

That these changes were not automatically bringing to pass a new Utopia, Langland was very well aware. New abuses were boldly striding to take the place of old ones or to share the booty with them. It was not alone in the church to the Friars that "Falseness for fear" had fled; for Guile, "almost affrighted to death, had been given a roof by the merchants and appareled as a 'prentice to serve the people." In this guise he played his part at the shop doors or beside

¹ Prologue, ll. 369-72.

the open displays on the streets, calling the master's wares to all passers.

Cooks and their knaves cried, "Hot pies, hot! Good pigs and geese! Come and dine, come and dine." Taverners, too, called, "White wine of Alsace, and red wine of Gascony, wine of the Rhine and wine of Rochelle, to wash down the roast!"¹

And in the meantime dishonesty flourished among brewers and bakers, butchers and cooks; for these are the men on earth who do the most harm to the poor people who buy in small portions. For they often poison the people privily, and they grow rich through their small trade, and get revenue themselves for what the poor people should put in their belly. Had they made their wealth in honesty, they had not built such high houses, nor bought such tenements for themselves, be ye full certain.²

As from time immemorial the lawyers had enjoyed an unpopularity all their own, it can hardly be said that the dislike of the people for the Templars was transferred to the jurists who became the possessors of their enviable property. Chaucer makes his representative of the profession a man of overwhelming external respectability which was a product of unsleeping discreetness compounded with oracular speech. He was a

¹ *Piers the Plowman*, tr. Warren, Prologue, p. 11.

² *Ibid.*, Passus III, p. 35.

master of form and precedent, and was so skilful in drawing up his papers that for an adequate fee he could defeat the law as cleverly as for an equal amount he could defend it. Langland's estimate was similar, although he naturally was less alive to the humor of the situation and vindictive in his aspersions against the oppressors of the poor. Lydgate in his *London Lyckpeny* presents the case of a poor man who "lackyng mony . . . myght not spede." He was robbed, refused provender, and generally neglected, but his chief grievance was that in none of the courts could he get any attention, because of his poverty.

Thus in his progress toward a larger freedom and a fairer share of the fruits of his own labors the luckless poor man was beset on every hand. The church defrauded him with mock dispensations; the physician beguiled him of what little gold he had for the preparation of sovereign remedies;¹ the tradesmen were watching for chances to give him inferior wares and false measures; the lawyer refused to serve him because the others had already stripped him bare.² Yet in spite of all, it is quite evident from poets

¹ Prologue, ll. 411-44, particularly last three lines.

² See John Lydgate, *London Lyckpeny*; also, for general characterization, Prologue, ll. 309-30; and *Piers the Plowman*, tr. Warren, Prologue, p. 11.

and historians alike that this same poor man was living in Merry England and in Merry London. All the love of display found its source in an energetic love of life. The gorgeous progresses of the King and the Lord Mayor, the solemn brilliance of the red-robed Aldermen, the gay pageants down gaily decorated Cheapside, the wondrous ladies of the court and the wondrously emulative ladies of the city, the church days and feast days and, best of all, the May days—these all belonged to no despondent people. They were the pleasures of a people some of whom were hopeful, but most of whom, better still, were simply carefree.

For the continued noise and uproar of the city, for its crowds, for its smells, the people cared nothing. They were part of the city. They loved everything that belonged to it—their great Cathedral; their hundred churches; their monasteries; their palaces and the men-at-arms; . . . the ridings and the festivals and the holy days; the ringing, clanging, clashing of the bells all day long; the drinking at the taverns; the wrestling and the archery; the dancing; the fife and tabor; the pageants and the mumming and the love-making—all, all they loved. And they thought in their pride that there was not anywhere in the whole habitable world . . . any city that might compare with famous London Town.¹

¹ Sir Walter Besant, *London*, 1892, pp. 261, 262.

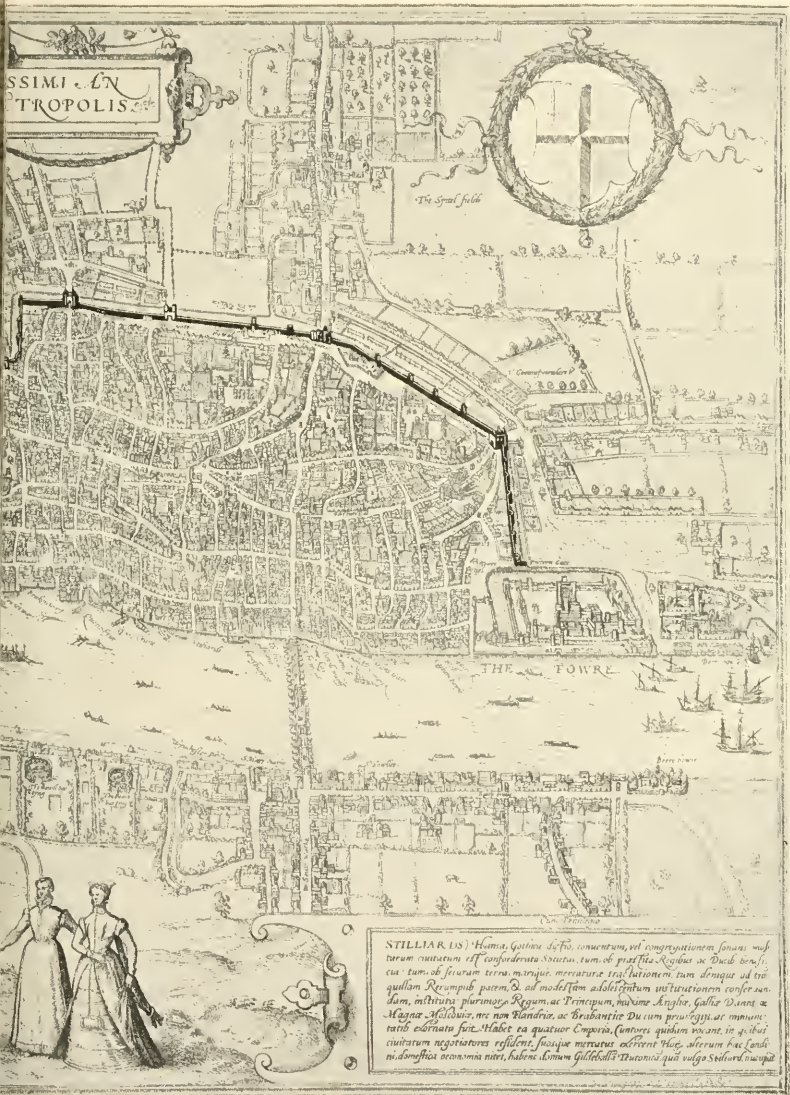
LONDINVM. FER
GLIAE REGNI



Hæc est regio in totius Angliæ civitas LONDINVM ad flu-
uam Thameſis ſita. Cæteri, ut plures exiſtunt. Trinobantium
nuncupata, multarum gentium commercio ſociata, gentis domus ornata te-
plo, ædificiis archiepiſcopi, clero ingenti, turri omnium circum deſcriptionem, ære
et prædicantibus, percellibus Denig, omnium rerum copia inque opum ex cellis
mirabilis. Inuenit in eam totius orbis opes que Thameſis, oceanum nauibus per
ſeptaem milia paſſuum, ad orbem præcæto alioſq; nauigabili. *W.*



LONDON IN 1572 (From a
The black line is



LONDINI



THE FOWRE



STILLIAR. DS) *Homo, Gothar de fto, conuentum, vel congregacionem, sonari, vult
 tarum civitatum est confederata Societas, tum ob praefata Regibus ac Ducibus bene-
 ficis, tum ob securam terrarum, marisque, mercaturae, et navigationem tam domique ad tri-
 quillam Reumpub pacem, et ad modestam adolefcentium institucionem conferen-
 dam, instituta plurimorum Regum, ac Principum, praesertim Angliae, Galliae, Daniae, ac
 Magnae Aeloduniae, nec non Flandriae, ac Brabantiae Ducum privilegio, ac immuni-
 tate ordinata fuit. Habet ea quatuor Emporia, Cantores quidem vocant, in quibus
 civitatum negotiatores resident, suaeque mercaturae edocent, etiam, alterum hoc Landi
 ni, domus hinc occupata navi, habent. Civium Gillebelli, Noronici qui vulgo Stillard, nuncupat*

Map by Braun and Hogenberg)
 e Wall of London



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CHAPTER II

SHAKESPEARE'S LONDON

From the age of Chaucer to the age of Shakespeare is somewhat over two hundred years. In the distance of both eras from the twentieth century the changes which took place between the fourteenth and the sixteenth should not be lost sight of. London had considerably more than doubled itself in population, rising from 40,000 to about 100,000; as a result it had greatly increased in size. The old walled City was still preserved in its integrity, but a large amount of building had been done outside of it. Southwark was much more of a community than before, especially along the river bank to the east of London Bridge; the roads leading out from Aldgate and Bishopsgate were flanked by double rows of houses for a half-mile or more; and the territory lying to the north and west sides—from Moorgate all the way around to the river—was generously populated. The river front as far down as the Abbey was solidly lined with imposing structures; Charing Cross was a considerable village, so that Westminster was the last link in a

now unbroken chain of public and private buildings.

An increase in population and size, however, shows no necessary change in the real character of the community. More important is the fact that England in the days of Shakespeare and Elizabeth became finally and confidently independent. The succession of struggles with outside powers for century after century had by no means been concluded in Chaucer's day; but with the destruction of the Armada in 1588, England may be said for the last time to have felt reasonable fear of invasion by a Continental power.

More important than either growth or independence is the fact that Shakespeare's England and London had become secularized. Not only was the idea of the pilgrimage gone out of date, but if reasons of diversion had given rise to a common cross-country journey by any thirty Londoners, the distribution of characters would have been utterly different in Elizabeth's day from what it was in that of Richard II. London was no longer overwhelmed by the religious orders. A natural degeneration, toward which Chaucer and Langland pointed before 1400, finally brought about between 1530 and 1540 the dissolution of

the monasteries. A commission was appointed, and when after investigation the abuses which existed within their walls were reported to Parliament, privileges from the smaller ones were first withdrawn and soon after the larger ones were condemned and taken over by the Crown. Many of the establishments were regranted as private holdings to powerful individuals, some were converted to school uses, and in a surprisingly short time the vast piles of architecture which had been devoted to the ostensibly religious pursuits of the few were turned over to the community and variously adapted to frankly worldly ends.

This dissolution of the monasteries was an effect rather than a cause, for a matter of deeper import than the mere reallocation of property was that there had come a redistribution of interest in the affairs of life. The Age of the New Learning had taken most minds away from those subjects to which the early monks had honestly devoted themselves. The relation of man to God had ceased to be as interesting as the relation of man to his fellows and the environment in which he was placed, so that the bewildered sense of baffled ignorance in which most of the thinking people of Chaucer's day were lost was replaced by a delighted feeling of interest and wonder at the

marvels of the material world. Thus it was that progress was made at once in astronomy, exploration, and the study of physical sciences in general, at the same time that men became interested anew in themselves and their ways, physical, psychical, and social. The spirit of the new age is in a fashion summed up in Hamlet's lines when, after referring to "this most excellent canopy, the air," and "this majestic roof fretted with golden stars," he said:

What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason!
how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express
and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension
how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon
of animals!¹

While this matter can easily be overemphasized, the shift in point of view from the churchly to the worldly is well illustrated in the developments connected with the theater. Records show that the early dramatic efforts of the Middle Ages were one evidence of a general movement to make more elaborate and attractive the house of worship and the services held therein; but they show further a steady succession of steps which took the drama quite out of the hands of the church. The first dramatic tropes were interpolated in the regular and formal church services. As they were

¹ *Hamlet*, Act II, scene ii.

further elaborated they were given independently of any special stated worship, were presented in the churchyards rather than under the church roof, were participated in by laymen, and were finally presented in the public squares under the auspices of craft guilds. With the development of Renaissance influence in England the alienation of church and stage became complete. For the Puritans, conservators of English morality, were for the most part either indifferent or hostile to all that distracted their minds from the "contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests," while in strong contrast the playwrights were transmitting to delighted audiences dramatic forms and fictions which were drawn from shockingly pagan ancestry.

A natural consequence of these developments was that by the days of Shakespeare plays and play-acting were all too often included among the diversions of the unrespectable, fostered, to be sure, under court auspices, but relentlessly opposed by the rigorous and conservative Puritan element who were conducting a regular campaign toward their complete elimination, actuated by the amiable feeling that because they were virtuous there should "be no more cakes and ale."¹ As a

¹ This hostility gave rise to various retorts from the stage, as for instance the speech of Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night* (Act II, scene iii), here alluded to. Zeal-of-the-Land Busy in Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* (Acts I, III, V) covers the Puritans with ridicule.

result of their persistent and finally successful lobbying the theaters of Shakespeare's day were to be found after 1576 outside the City limits. Technically the legislation was a triumph, but practically it amounted to very little, for every playhouse was still within easy walking-distance from the center of the town. Among the earliest the Theater (built 1576), the Curtain (1576), and the Fortune (1599) were on the north of London, and the Rose (1592), the Globe (rebuilt in 1599 from the old Theater), and the Hope, or Bear Garden (1613), were across the river in Southwark.

For the casual visitor the typical playhouses of the day must have attracted immediate attention. They were as a rule round or octagonal buildings, fairly high-walled, surmounted with little extra cupolas, and topped upon these with flags on the days when performances were to be held. The plans and drawings of the city made by various contemporary artists seem in many respects to have been so inaccurate in scale that it is very hard to believe they did not all tend to err in suggesting that the theaters were tower-like in their general proportions. It is difficult to estimate just how there could have been room for even a modestly small audience in the narrow

and angularly erect structures pictured in various drawings of the Bear Garden, the Globe, and the Rose. Moreover, the picture of the Fortune Theater, which is quite different from the others, and the specifications of the building are more nearly what one would expect for a hall designed to hold a fairly large number of people.

As may be inferred from the first chapter, the general scheme for theater construction is quite evidently derived from the conventional plan of the old inns. These hostelries were built flush on the street about an inner court, balconies passing entirely around the yards and serving as hallways for surrounding rooms on the upper floors. The early players, in order to give a performance at one of these inns, would build a platform at one end projecting out one-third or one-half way into the yard. From the ground level a play thus presented could be witnessed by the hostlers and servants as they stood under the open sky on whatever kind of rough or wet surface the season and the weather might furnish, but from the balconies the patrons of the house and such others as secured admission could observe the performance from under cover and very probably from comfortable seats.

The specifications for the building of the



made about the year 1862

Engraved for us by Mr. [unreadable]

THE GLOBE THEATER

Fortune Theater, dated January 8, 1599, show how closely this general scheme was followed. The building was eighty feet square on the outside dimensions, and in the inside fifty-five feet square, the remaining twenty-five feet being taken up by the balconies—twelve and one-half feet in width on all four sides. The stage was forty-three feet in length, and extended forward to the middle of the yard, or between twenty-seven and twenty-eight feet. As the balcony ran behind the stage, it was possible to use this in connection with the play, as well also as the space beneath it. Thus were roughly duplicated the conditions which prevailed in the old inn-yards, and with modifications these were the lines on which the Elizabethan theaters were all constructed.

In general, the extreme simplicity of setting, which has become a byword of literary history, has been somewhat exaggerated. The number of properties was not inconsiderable, and the expense for special settings and for floral decorations frequently amounted to a respectable figure. The fact still remains, however, that, in comparison to the devices of the present, the expedients of the stage manager were of the simplest, and the responsibility of contributing to the illusion of the hour was thrown much more frankly on the

audience than it is today. It was for them to indulge in that "willing suspension of disbelief" that constitutes poetic faith. This was the more necessary through the usual lack of scenic costumes, for the apparel of the actors, whether they were playing in *Timon of Athens*, *Julius Caesar*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet*, or *Richard III*, was likely to be inappropriate to any but modern times. One more tax upon the spectators' imagination was laid by the work of the boy actors, these playing the female rôles in default of women actors. In the gorgeous masques and pageants of the day, which we shall discuss later, elaborateness of scene and costume was carried to the most extreme points; but not in the theater.

As the theater was throughout this period exposed to the skies, the pit being quite uncovered, the presentation of plays hinged upon weather conditions. Above the theater, a part corresponding to the flies of today, was a small superstructure, and from this was flown a flag which could tell to distant patrons whether or not a performance was to be given. If it was, the distribution of the audience corresponded with that in the inn-yard; and the pit, or that portion of the floor immediately in front of the stage, which is now regarded as the best part of the house, was then the cheapest

and most indiscriminate. In America there is nothing to recall this old arrangement of the spectators. In Germany, however, one still discovers that in the larger theaters the best seats are the "erste Reihe, erster Rang"—first row, first balcony—and the seats on the first floor are next in value. In London today conditions are even nearer those of the past, for the pit still survives, although it has been pushed to the rear of the floor, where people who wish to take their chances can secure places—on wooden benches to be sure—for two shillings and sixpence, the seats immediately in front of them costing slightly more than four times as much.¹ The one Elizabethan usage of which there is no survival was the custom of allowing play-goers to sit actually upon the stage, a vantage point occupied by the young gallants who wanted to be in what we should call today "the limelight." Modern vanity has to be content with a stage box at the play, or at the opera with a place in the "diamond horseshoe."

The atmosphere of the playhouse was free and easy, the players gaining and holding the attention

¹ It is interesting to know, too, that in accordance with the nature of the play the distribution of the floor between the pit and the orchestra stalls will fluctuate. I have been on the same day at one theater in which a Shakespeare play was presented where the pit occupied only the last six rows, and to a popular melodrama in a neighboring house where the pit included all but the first five rows.

of the audience by virtue of the merits of the play and their art, little protected by any polite conventions on the part of the audience. As Dekker points out,¹ doubtless with some exaggeration but yet with greater measure of truth, the young buck who took his position on the stage gained notoriety not merely by virtue of being seen in a conspicuous place, but on account of his aggressive behavior. If he chose, he might come late, or if early he could play cards upon the platform. He could make comments upon the play and the author, and, if too much displeased might, "rise with a screwd and discontented face from his stoole to be gone." In the meantime, communication with the audience was possible, talk with such women as might be within hearing, and the chance of male retort not only by word of mouth but in more vigorous ways:

Neither are you to be hunted from thence, though the Scarcrows in the yard hoot at you, hisse at you, spit at you, yea, throw durt euen in your teeth: tis most Gentlemanlike patience to endure all this, and to laugh at the silly Animals.

Yet the conduct within doors was mild compared to the carryings-on outside the theaters. The

¹ *The Guls Horne-booke*, 1609, (a running satire on the ways of the would-be gallant), chap. vi, "How a Gallant Should Behave Himselfe in a Playhouse."

Puritans had good ground for their continued protests against the disorder promoted by play-going, and particularly against the Sunday outbreaks. Where there are great concourses of people, dissensions among the rulers, and poor policing, the devil is easily raised.

In general, it may be said that the Elizabethans were not given to extreme self-discipline. They liked noise whether it took the form of loud mirth or angry altercation, and they enjoyed action whether it were in dancing about the maypole or in a free fight. Naturally, then, on holidays and Sundays no great stimulus was necessary to produce an uproar in the neighborhood of the theaters as the crowds were assembling or scattering. The very opposition of the Puritans to the theater on the ground that it encouraged unruliness may have added a little zest to the already healthy spirit of unrest.

Of the inns and taverns, to the structure of which the theater was in some measure indebted, we do not know that the proportionate number was far greater than in earlier times. Fitz-Stephen's complaint in the twelfth century that one of the two pests of London was "the immoderate drinking of fools" suggests no dearth of drinking-places even then. It may be that

the apparent multiplication of them is due merely to the greater abundance of Elizabethan records.

On the way from Whitehall to Charing Cross we pass the White Heart, the Red Lion, the Mermaide, iij Tuns, Salutation, the Graihound, the Bell, the Golden Lion. In sight of Charing Cross: the Garter, the Crown, the Bear and Ragged Staff, the Angel, the King Harry Head. There from Charing Cross towards ye cittie: another White Hart, the Eagle and the Child, the Helmet, the Swan, the Bell, King Harry Head, the Flower de Luce, Angel, Holy Lambe, the Bear and Harrow, the Plough, the Shippe, the Black Bell, another King Harry Head, the Bull Head, the Golden Bull, a sixpenny ordinary, another Flower de Luce, the Red Lion, the Horns, the White Horse, the Princess' arms, Bell Savage's Inn, the St. John the Baptist, the Talbot, the Ship of War, the St. Dunstan, the Hercules, or the Owld Man Tavern, the Mitre, another King Harry Head, iij Tuns, and the iij Cranes.¹

These and hundreds of others all through London partook of the nature of the age. They were rude and barbarous in some respects, and in others almost splendid. Harrison, in describing them in 1587,² found himself hard beset, between his pride and his candor, to tell the whole truth about them. They were "great and sump-

¹ Harleian MS 6850, fol. 31.

² *Harrison's England*, "New Shakespeare Society Publications," Series VI, reprinted in cheap form in "Camelot Series."

tuous," and the guests might each use his own room as his castle. They boasted good food and clean linen, guaranty against loss of property, and ample service for man and beast. So far he could proceed with a clear conscience, but now, perhaps as the memory of his own wrongs returned to him, he was compelled to admit that the hostlers did "deceive the beast oftentimes of his allowance," and that whole establishments were more or less in league with the gentlemen of the road, telling them which of the patrons were best worth lying in wait for. Finally, as a kind of mitigating conclusion, he recorded that their signs were gorgeous, sometimes costing as much as thirty or forty pounds.

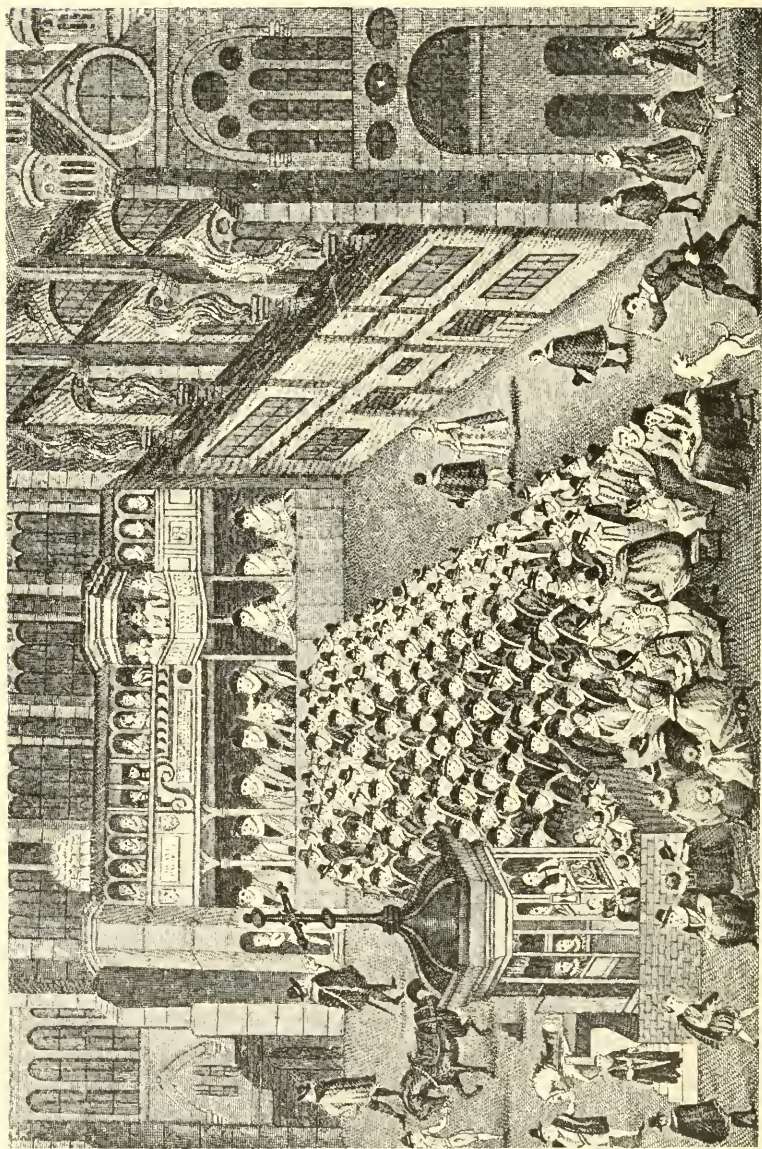
These taverns were quite as interesting on account of the use of their rooms by Londoners as by travelers who slept under their roofs. There were all sorts of people. The more reputable the patrons, the less spectacular and interesting was their behavior. For the young gallant of such a type as Lord Dalgarno,¹ or the type which Glenvarloch for a while developed into, and for all the men of less consequence who naturally followed in the train of such young bloods, the Ordinary was a popular resort.

¹ Scott, *The Fortunes of Nigel*, chaps. xi, xii ff.

Dekker devotes a chapter to it in his historic satire.¹ The young "Gul" is instructed in detail. He must arrive with a flourish; select his single companion with care; talk ostentatiously not to the general company but at it; "eate as impudently as can be," and then resort to whatever business calls him. This business, however, will probably be gambling, "for there is no such place of public resort but what your eyes may be therein contaminated by the sight of a pack of pieces of pasteboard and your ears profaned by the rattle of those little spotted cubes of ivory." In playing, the "Gul" must show great self-control, lest his anger in losing betray the shortness of his funds. "Mary, I will allow you to sweat priuately, and teare six or seven score paire of cards, be the damnation of some dozen or twenty baile of dice, and forswear play a thousand times in an houre, but not sweare."

Before the day is far gone the situation will be saved by a new diversion: "the guests are all up, the guilt rapiers ready to be hanged, the French Lackquey and the Irish Footeboy, shrugging at the doores with their master's hobby-horses, to ride to the new play: that's the Randevous; thither they are gallopt in post."

¹ *The Guls Horne-booke*, chap. v, The "Ordinary"; chap. vii, "The Taverne."



ST. PAUL'S CROSS AS IT WAS IN 1620

When James I listened to a sermon preached therefrom by the Bishop of London

(From an engraving by R. Wilkinson, 1811)

If the worldlings had taken possession of the tavern, as was natural from the beginning, and of the theater, as was finally to be expected, they had also not allowed the church to escape. Ben Jonson in his *Every Man Out of his Humour*¹ gives one a startling suggestion as to the way in which the noble old St. Paul's Cathedral was being misused, and Dekker offers more explicit testimony.² The surrounding churchyard, although dignified by Paul's Cross from which occasional sermons were still preached, was used far more for various purposes of business; but the interior of the church itself was no better off. The main aisle of the nave, famous as Paul's Walk, during the middle of each day was thronged with citizens who came there for every sort of purpose but a religious one. Different points in the Walk were employed for different kinds of rendezvous. Chaucer's Man of Law gathered with his fellows in the porch, but in the days of Elizabeth the lawyers did their self-advertising within. Laborers presented themselves for hire here; merchandise was displayed; peddlers of all sorts did a thriving business; and the dissolute population

¹ *Every Man Out of His Humour*, Act III, scene i.

² *The Guls Horne-booke*, chap. iv, "How a Gallant Should Behave Himselfe in Powle's Walkes."

of London, the immortal Bardolph included,¹ contributed to make the place notorious. Distressing as the spectacle may have been from a purely religious point of view, St. Paul's as a picturesque compendium of the life of the City must have proved a fascinating place for any traveler through town.

To pass eastward from St. Paul's was to go to the real business center of the City, Cheapside, the nature of which had not changed since Chaucer's day.² The progress of a pageant through Cheapside was not an occasion on which the populace played the part of meek and lowly spectators, for the degree of self-discipline noticeable in a modern English crowd had not then been attained. The Lord Mayor's show of 1617 as described by an eyewitness seems to have been made picturesque quite as much by the informalities of the occasion as by the regularly prepared display. "The sleek, plump city marshal on horseback, looking like the head priest of Bacchus, tried to keep order in vain."³ The companies in the windows showered

¹ *II Henry IV*, Act I, scene ii. Falstaff says of Bardolph; "I bought him in Paul's, and he'll buy me a horse in Smithfield," etc.

² See chap. i, pp. 7-9.

³ Harrison, *Description of England*, 1587, Forewords to Part II, 36, p. 55, "New Shakespeare Society Publications," Series VI, 5, 8.

squibs and firecrackers below, to the apparent delight of the people who were hit, and fireworks were rather recklessly used to clear the way for the procession. On the few coaches which appeared in the street the mob climbed and clung, freely using mud on the occupants in one case where they protested. There is in all of this pomp and pageantry as one judges it from the standards of today a curious mixture of crudeness and splendor, which in various recombinations repeatedly appears in the manners and customs of the age.

As any procession progressed out of Cheapside past St. Paul's through Ludgate down Fleet Street, it passed through a district lined with small shops of a kind that were in existence from Chaucer's day to Dickens', although at no time more flourishing than in Shakespeare's period. The shops were small and open and so arranged that more or less of the display of goods could be made in the street. The masters were aided by one or two apprentices who were variously useful but most conspicuous on account of two activities. One of these was in the soliciting of trade, in promoting which they acted somewhat as the "barkers" in the miscellaneous districts of modern expositions, and somewhat as the salesmen do in

the modern cheaper-grade department stores. The variety of cries, frequently referred to in the literature of the day, has been used by Scott in giving local color to the early chapters of *Sir Nigel*. The other activity of the apprentices was hardly official, involving as it did the general free fights in which the apprentices against common enemies rallied each other with the cry "Clubs!" It was not a bad training for the times when they were drafted into real war, and doubly justified Simon Eyre's exhortation to one of them in Dekker's *Shoemaker's Holiday*¹ that he "fight for the honour of the gentle craft, . . . the flower of St. Martin's, the mad knaves of Bedlam, Fleet Street, Tower Street, and Whitechapel; crack me the crowns of the French knaves, pox on them, crack them; fight, by the Lord of Ludgate, fight my fine boy!"

If the 'prentices of this neighborhood passed all bounds and put themselves in contempt of the law, they were near to a refuge—one of the strange places of sanctuary for people who were dodging creditors and bailiffs. Originally a respectable residence district, it had fallen into disrepute until it was as notorious as it was picturesque.

¹ *Shoemaker's Holiday*, Act I, scene i.

Whitefriars, adjacent to the Temple, then well known as Alsatia, had at this time and for nearly a century afterwards, the privilege of a sanctuary, unless against the writ of the Lord Chief Justice or the Lords of the Privy Council. Indeed, as the place abounded with desperadoes of every description—bankrupt citizens, ruined gamblers, irreclaimable prodigals, desperate duellists, bravoes, homicides, and debauched profligates of every description, all leagued together to maintain the immunities of their asylum—it was both difficult and unsafe for the officers of the law to execute warrants emanating even from men of the highest authority, amongst men whose safety was inconsistent with warrants or authority of any kind.¹

Even when, on occasions of great importance, the sheriff did force his way in with an armed posse, little was likely to come of it, as the word was passed along in plenty of time to forewarn the fugitive to change his hiding-place until the hurly-burly was over again. In the days of Shakespeare this quarter was not at its worst. In 1623, when the First Folio edition was printed, the name Alsatia appeared in a tract, and for the greater part of a century after the district thrived in its own peculiar way. In the latter eighteenth century Mitre Court, in the very midst of it, was the extremely respectable gathering-place of Dr. Johnson and his circle.

¹ Scott, *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Book I, chap. xvi. See also Ainsworth, *Jack Sheppard*, Epoch III, chap. viii.

The procession toward Westminster passing down Fleet Street came next to

those bricky towres

The which on Temmes brode aged back doe ryde,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilome wont the Templar Knights to byde
Till they decayd through pride.¹

The Temple, originally the establishment of the Templars, shortly after their downfall in 1313, passed to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, who rented the Outer Temple to an individual and the Inner and Middle to the students of the Common Law. At the dissolution of the monasteries the leases were continued by the Crown, until toward the end of Shakespeare's life in the year of Milton's birth, 1608, James I granted the two temples to the Benchers of the Inns of Court and their successors forever.

At the western limit of these precincts Temple Bar separated Fleet Street from the Strand, making the boundary of the land outside the walls which was still under control of the city. By an old custom a gate was always closed here when the Monarch wished to enter the city and opened only after the sounding of a trumpet, a parley, and the granting of permission by the Lord

¹ Spenser, "Prothalamion," ll. 132-36.

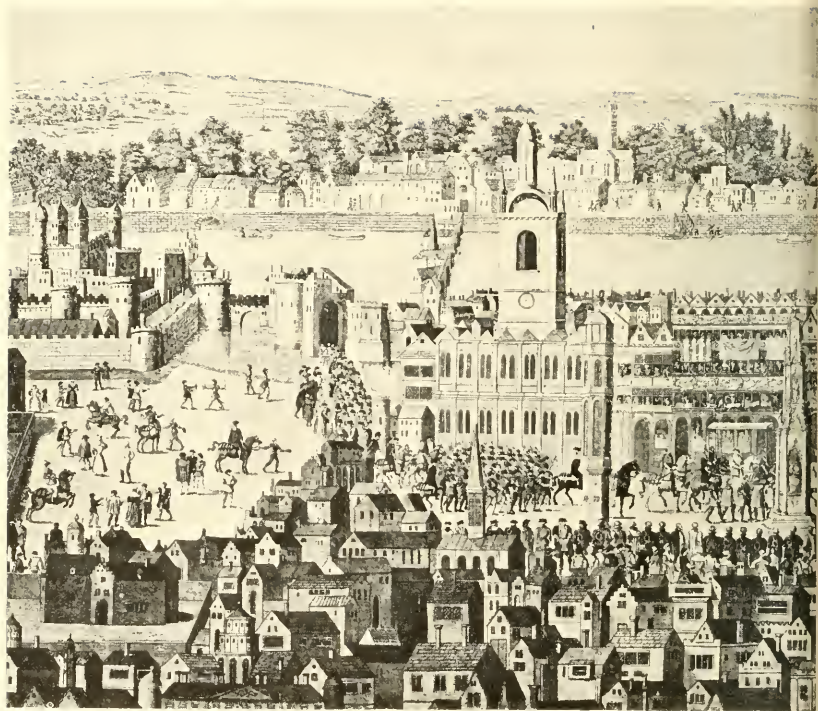
Mayor. The gates are gone and the King today has equal privileges with his meanest subject, but on great state occasions the old ceremonial is still revived.

The last stage of the state procession westward was by way of the Strand and Charing Cross through Whitehall to the Abbey. From the days of Henry VIII to those of William III, Whitehall was the Royal Palace turned to the uses of the Crown after it had been wrested from Cardinal Wolsey, who held it under the name of York House. One gets a vivid idea of what passed within and around it from an attentive reading of Scott's *The Fortunes of Nigel*.¹ That same combination of splendor and lack of finesse already noted is suggested by a curious catalogue which in describing it says that in the days of Henry VIII it contained a series of "galleries and courts, a large hall, a chapel, a tennis court, a cock pit, an orchard, and a banqueting-house." In the new banqueting-hall erected by King James in 1606, an ill-fated building which survived only eleven years, a masque of Ben Jonson's was presented on every succeeding Twelfth Night. The splendor of an Elizabethan masque is apparent from Robert

¹ *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Book I, chaps. v ff.; also *Peveril of the Peak*, Book II, chap. xiv.

Laneham's letter made familiar by Scott's use of it in describing the performance arranged by Leicester at Kenilworth during the progress of Queen Elizabeth in 1582. Another side of such a presentation is suggested by Busino's description¹ of the Twelfth Night at Whitehall in 1617-18. For hours the audience waited, until finally after ten o'clock the royal party appeared. The masque *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* began. "It were long to tell how Bacchus on a cart was followed by Silenus on a barrel and twelve wicker flasks who performed the most ludicrous antics." Twelve boys as pages followed, and were succeeded by twelve cavaliers in masks, who, on choosing partners, danced a most hilarious and individual succession of steps before the King. When they began to flag, James impatiently goaded them on, upon which "the Marquis of Buckingham . . . immediately sprang forward cutting a score of lofty and very minute capers with such grace and agility that he not only appeased the ire of his angry sovereign, but moreover rendered himself the admiration and the delight of everybody." Descriptions of this sort reassure those readers of Scott who feel that he has presented the King

¹ Harrison, *Description of England*, Forewords to Part II § 6, pp. 57, 58, "New Shakespeare Society Publications," Series VI, 5, 8.



London Bridge Bow Church
The Standard
Goldsmiths' Row

PROCESSION OF EDWARD VI FROM THE TOWER
(From a print)



Cheapside: "The Beauty of London"

St. Paul's

Ludgate

Temple Bar

Charing Cross

The Cross

Westminster

TO WESTMINSTER, FEBRUARY 10, 1546-47

(of 1647)

and "Steenie" and "Baby Charles" as much too far below the angels.

Although the land route we have described was a famous line of travel from the Tower to Westminster, rather more people on ordinary occasions made their way up or down the river by boat. The streets, especially prepared on great days, were usually in pretty bad shape. The case of an official who was punished in the reign of Elizabeth for the defects in the highway between the Royal Exchange and Westminster ceases to be an impressive evidence of the scrupulous attention paid to street cleaning and repairing when one reads that he received 313 stripes, one for each gully which crossed the streets in a distance of less than two miles. It is not surprising that under such circumstances vehicles were not generally used. Moreover, for foot passengers the streets were filthy beyond belief. As in Chaucer's day refuse was still suffered to accumulate in the one central gutter; the odors arising therefrom mingled with those which were wafted from innumerable shops and kitchens; and, to cap all, the din of artisans, the bawling of shopkeepers, and the peals of a fair proportion of London's hundred and odd church bells assailed the long-suffering pedestrian. Often for purposes

of ease, therefore, when the tide favored the direction of the wayfarer, and often for luxuriousness and the picturesqueness of the route, the water course was chosen.

The Thames in Shakespeare's day was a splendid stream,¹ of which one can get a fair idea from the drawings of Visscher and Hollar. It was a subject on which Elizabethans loved to dwell, the fairness of the water, the abundance of fish, and the beauty of the myriads of swans who floated upon it appealing to every eye. Thus Harrison in his *England* is not alone in his enthusiasm as he writes:

In like maner I could entreat of the infinit number of swans dailie to be sene upon this river, the two thousand wherries and small boats, whereby three thousand poore watermen are mainteined, through the carriage and recarriage of such persons as passe or repasse from time to time upon the same! beside those huge tideboats, tiltbotes, and barges, which either carrie passengers, or bring necessarie provision from all quarters of Oxfordshire, Barkeshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Essex, Surrie, and Kent, unto the citie of London. But . . . I surceasse at this time to speake anie more of them here.²

¹ See Spenser, "Prothalamion."

² Harrison, *Description of England*, 1587, Forewords to Part I; extracts from Book I, "New Shakespeare Society Publications," Series VI. 1, p. xxxvii.

Above London Bridge the traffic was largely in passengers, but just below was the natural terminal for a large number of east-going ships. The great period of prosperity in ocean commerce was no greater than it had been for generations, though it involved business with European ports from the farthest ends of the Mediterranean to Scandinavia, as well as to the thrice-distant Orient in the days before the Suez Canal. In the Pool, as the harbor below the Bridge was called, a great fleet of sail was usually to be seen, and Billingsgate, not yet degenerated into a mere fish market, was the busiest of shipping-points.

The prevalent combination of display and primitiveness appeared in the dwellings of the day. From the point of view of modern conveniences the present generation even to the poorer classes would endure with impatience the conditions of the past. There were no such things as plumbing, proper disposal of waste, heating of whole houses, adequate ventilation. The accumulation of stale rushes on the floors was so noisome that perfumes were lavishly employed to drown the stench; yet at the same time a certain sumptuousness in architecture was to be found not merely in the mansions of the ostentatious rich. The beauty of the palaces along the Thames and

such houses as Crosby Hall is familiar enough, but in a lesser way here and there about the city there were many merchants' homes which in point of elaborateness of exterior were triumphant pieces of artistic display.

In point of extravagance of dress,¹ though of course, it is the fashion of any age to consider itself a high standard from which to judge all others, it does seem today that the gorgeous ingenuity was almost beyond belief. An amusing protest against the importation of English fashions into America by Nathaniel Ward in 1647 might lead one to believe that this was a mere Puritan objection to a natural desire for ornament, if the protests in England itself were not expressed with equal violence. The running marginal comments in Harrison's *England* upon this subject furnish sufficient evidence.

Our fanciful interest in dress is astonishing—I cannot describe England's dress; first Spanish; then French; then German; then Turkish; then Barbaryan; they look as absurd as a dog in a doublet—how men and women worry the tailor and abuse him! then the trying on! we sweat till we drop to make our clothes fit—our hair we

¹ See Philip Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's Youth*, 1583; chap. iii, "Men's Dress"; chap. iv, "Abuses of Womens Apparell," "New Shakespeare Society Publications," Series VI, 4, p. 6.

poll or curl, wear long or cropt—some courtiers wear rings in their ears to improve God's work—women are far worse than men—God's good gifts are turned into wantonness.”¹

Says Portia of Falconbridge, the young baron of England, when she is discussing her various suitors:

I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior everywhere.²

More and more as one dwells on the picturesque details of social and literary history the idea is brought home that when all is said the most interesting of facts is to be discovered in the essential likeness between the past and the present. Invention has of course made enormous strides, contributing in its progress new words, metaphors, customs, and methods of life; but it has contributed few new ideas and few characteristics which were not to be found in human nature in the days before the flood. So when we come to the well-established generalizations about the days of Shakespeare and the London of Shakespeare the distinguishing features are in part obviously material, and in part mere differences in emphasis

¹ Harrison, *Description of England*, 1587, Book II, chap. vii, “New Shakespeare Society Publications,” Series VI, 1.

² *Merchant of Venice*, Act I, scene ii.

between that age and this. The most extravagant story that could be told as to the vogue of the London theater of 1600 would be pitifully put in the shade by the commonplace facts of 1900. Although bull-baiting and bear-baiting may no longer exist at the present time, the cock pit has not disappeared and the prize ring does its work in satisfying the savage instincts of one type of sportsman. Elizabethan elegance in architecture and in dress have been dwelt on with great satisfaction by modern writers, who are in danger of overlooking in the present some features which they can see very clearly through the vista of the centuries. Possibly the men of today are less gorgeous in their dress than Raleigh and his friends, but the protests of press and pulpit at the reign of the modern milliner and modiste are as vehement as anything that can be educed from the records of the past. Moreover, the drain on the pocket-book caused by such indulgences or brought about by the cost of the ordinary commodities, makes one sometimes assume that the high cost of living is a modern invention; but even here the Elizabethans can claim precedence. Tariff, rents, and the cost of labor were a constant source of distress. The more one contemplates Elizabeth's period the more complicated the view

becomes, but in the last analysis all the impressions can be classified under two heads: the striking contrasts between the externals of then and now, and the startling proofs of identity in the character of that age and of this.

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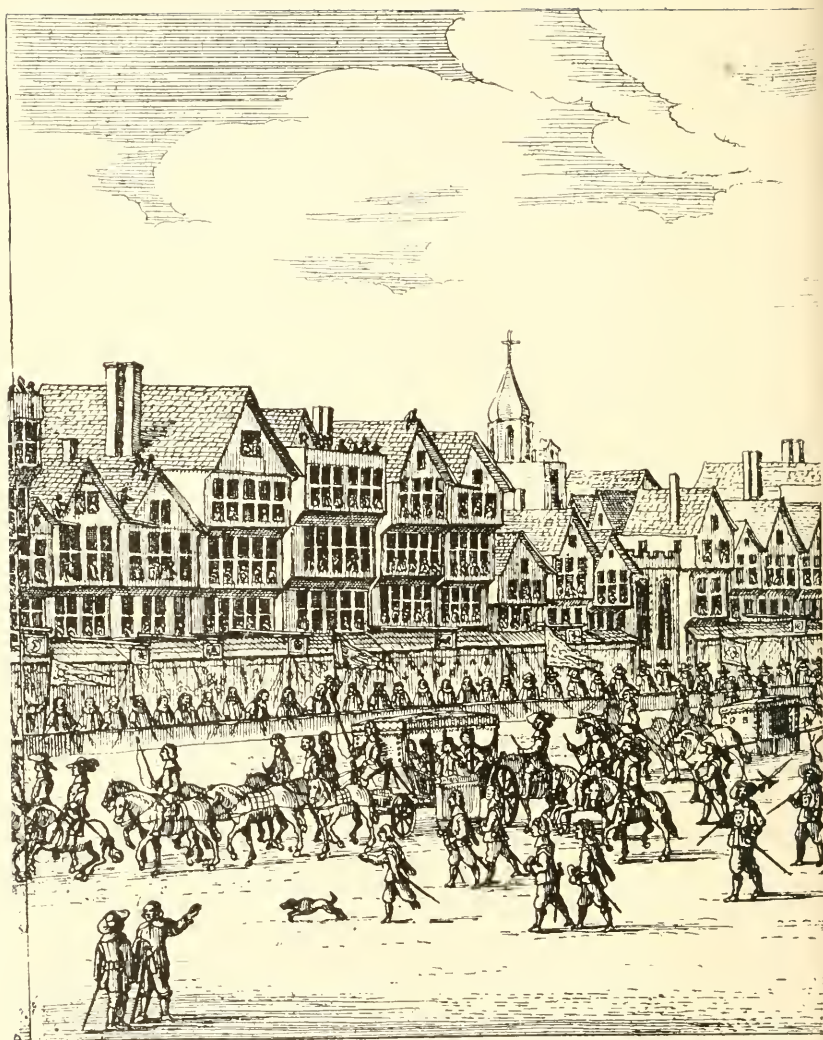
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ENTRANCE OF (FRENCH) QUEEN MOTHER TO
From an engraving by De-la-Sarre,



LONDON IN 1638—PASSING THROUGH CHEAPSIDE

French historiographer, 1639

CHAPTER III

MILTON'S LONDON

There is no century in English history in which some clear understanding of the political affairs is more necessary to an intelligent appreciation of the literature than the seventeenth. A clean swath of civil conflict was cut across the two mid-decades; and all that either preceded or followed them must be known in the light of these years of strife. Hence it is necessary to pay more attention to the history of this than of any other period. If the present chapter is out of scale or harmony with the others in this volume, the reason for such a fault originates in history and not in the student who attempts to write about it.

Shakespeare's dates were 1564-1616; Milton's 1608-1674. In Shakespeare's day London enjoyed a period of courtly splendor and opulence. Elizabeth was a spectacular monarch; she surrounded herself with people after her own heart. But she was also an astute monarch; and this she demonstrated by the success with which she maintained England's dignity among the nations,

and postponed the imminent civil conflict which came to a head soon after her death. It threatened loudly while James was on the throne; it came to a climax with the death of Charles I. After eleven years of unrest the Commonwealth was overthrown by a retrogressive revolution which restored the crown to the Stuarts in the person of Charles II; and the whole series of events culminating in the unholy triumph of Puritanism and reaching its catastrophe in the still more unholy return of the Court, was witnessed and promoted and deplored by John Milton.

Furthermore, in a limited degree the history of these two generations is reflected in little in his own career. For in many respects he was up to 1640 a belated Elizabethan, without question he was a Cromwellian for the next twenty years, and from 1660 to the end of his life he was the sternly undefeated champion of a lost cause. So, too, the whole history of the time is recorded in a series of brilliant tableaux which were enacted in his own home city. The London which enjoyed the masques of his young manhood, and wondered at the ecclesiastical zeal of Laud, and shuddered at the executions of Strafford and Charles, and witnessed with doubts and misgivings the sessions of the Short and Long and Rump parliaments,

and submitted to the two Cromwells, and exulted in the return of Monarchy in '60, and survived the Plague and the Fire in '66—this London is surely not without its own character and interest for the student of literary history.

In this growing town, for much of the time within the limits of the original city, Milton lived in no less than eleven houses. He was born, and dwelt until he was fifteen years old, in Bread Street, just off Cheapside almost under the shadow of St. Paul's. After his university career and his life on the Continent, he moved to St. Bride's Churchyard, on the Strand;¹ next to two successive houses near Aldersgate; then to Holborn, a half-mile west beyond Newgate; farther, in a series of rapid changes, to Whitehall, Westminster, twice more near Aldersgate, once again on Holborn, and finally at Artillery Walk, just outside Moorgate.

Like many another man who has risen to eminence, he was in his youth a battle-ground of sternly competing influences. His religious parents hoped that he might develop into a life of rich service in the church. Yet in his father was engrained a love of music, and an appreciation of

¹ The St. Bride's Church of Milton's youth was destroyed by the fire of 1666. The present St. Bride's (see cut opposite p. 120), was completed shortly after Milton's death.

the arts which were quite out of harmony with strictest Puritanism. To a generation which assumes that truth and beauty are at one in their higher manifestations, the evidences of what was a real conflict in Milton seem almost negligible. In random passages scattered throughout his works he has told his story according to a practice not infrequent among story-tellers; so, though it is John the Baptist who speaks, these lines may be taken as autobiography:

When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be public good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things.¹

Self-schooled in self-analysis of this sort, it is not surprising that at the age of twenty-three he grieved over his thus far wasted life and resolved to live "as ever in my great Task-Master's eye."² The death a few years later of his beloved friend Edward King moved him to one of the most stirring invectives ever launched at the established church. To one-half England these were delightful sentiments, but this half of England could

¹ *Paradise Regained*, Book I, ll. 201-6.

² Milton's sonnet "On His Having Arrived at the Age of Twenty-three."

not take unqualified pleasure in Milton, for in "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso,"¹ which belong to the same general period of waxing maturity, when Milton referred to the church, he did it to record his pleasure, not in the lining-out of psalms or in the homiletics of hell-fire, but to recall his enjoyment of the "dim, religious light" that filled the richly decorated Gothic pile in which the most attractive of ceremonials was the wedding service. He invoked the gentler conjurations of music, and dwelt, in imagination at least, not only on tragedy as it was appearing on a degenerating stage, but on Ben Jonson's comedies and the pastorals of Shakespeare as well.

His interest in the stage, moreover, was not limited to speculation alone—*Arcades* and *Comus* in proof. Strange to relate, the coming Latin Secretary to Oliver Cromwell was actually a writer of masques—collaborator with Henry Lawes, composer, and other unreligious aids. *Comus* is an especially significant straw in the rising wind. The charm of the production as it was presented must have depended very greatly on the beauty of the music and the tableaux, and, as far as Milton's share was concerned, on those introductory and connecting passages which formed

¹ "L'Allegro," ll. 117-50; "Il Penseroso," ll. 97-105, 155-66.

a setting for the tedious casuistry of *Comus* and *The Lady*. For the thesis of this masque as a whole was painfully improving, the application of the text most laborious, and *The Lady* a female who, for rigid, angular unamiability masquerading in the rôle of virgin loveliness, is hard to match in literature. Yet the evidence of the real discrepancy between what this masque was conventionally supposed to be doing and what it must have achieved is a clear index to what was going on in the mind of a young man who was sharing with his generation the conflict between a wanton liberality which had belonged to the past, and a no less wanton straitness of bigotry which was the threat of the immediate future.

See how striking was the progress of events in the year or two before the production of *Comus* in September, 1634.

For a generation Puritan opposition to the drama had been growing in weight and strength, the theater during these years naturally increasing in hostility to its enemies. Early in 1633 the struggle became more bitter than ever because of the appearance of an extraordinary book by one William Prynne, an Utter Barrister of Lincoln's Inn. Its title is too long to print in full, but the purport of it may be gathered from

these gleanings: "*Histrion-Mastix: The Player's Scourge, or Actor's Tragoedie* wherein it is largely evidenced. . . . That Popular Stage Plays (the very pomps of the Divell) are sinful, heathenish, lewd, ungodly spectacles ; and that the profession of Play-Poets or Stage-Players are unlawful, infamous and misbeseeming Christians. All pretences to the contrary are here likewise fully answered, and the unlawfulness of acting or beholding academical Interludes briefly discussed." Under this enormous name many sins were committed. Playwrights and actors were offended, royalty affronted, and members of the Inns of Court more or less outraged because one of their own number had had the temerity not only to perpetrate the book but to dedicate it to the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn.

There was a great deal of time and talk wasted before, in November, ten months after this literary explosion, the principal members of the Society of the four Inns of Court (Lincoln's, Gray's, the Middle and the Inner Temples) joined together to produce if possible the most completely splendid masque ever staged in England. It seems to have turned out so. It was three months in preparation; it was produced

under and by the most skilled antiquarians, artists, poets, musicians, singers, dancers, and actors to be found anywhere; it was preceded by a street pageant from the Temple to Whitehall so gorgeous that the King and Queen must needs have it "fetch a turn round the tilt yard that they might see it all again." *The Triumph of Peace* was an intricately elaborate combination of pure allegory and social satire. What between Peace and Law and Justice and Genius, Opinion and Fancy who interpreted them, a succession of comic anti-masques, and the ultimately appropriate appearance of the Dawn, "this earthly group and glory, if not vanity [was] soon past, over and gone, as if it had never been."¹ A week after the first performance before the Court at Whitehall, it was given at the Merchants' Hall in the city under the patronage of the Lord Mayor. And a week after that, again at Whitehall, the hardly less splendid *Coelum Britannicum* was put on. Thus was Prynne given the retort courteous.

Moreover, the powers were not content simply with theatrical vindications of their rights. They set out to punish as well as to rebuke offenders, and in the catalogue of offenders they were dis-

¹ It cost £21,000, equivalent in purchasing power today to £50,000, or a quarter of a million dollars. See Masson, *Life of Milton, in Connection with the History of His Times*, I, 580-87.

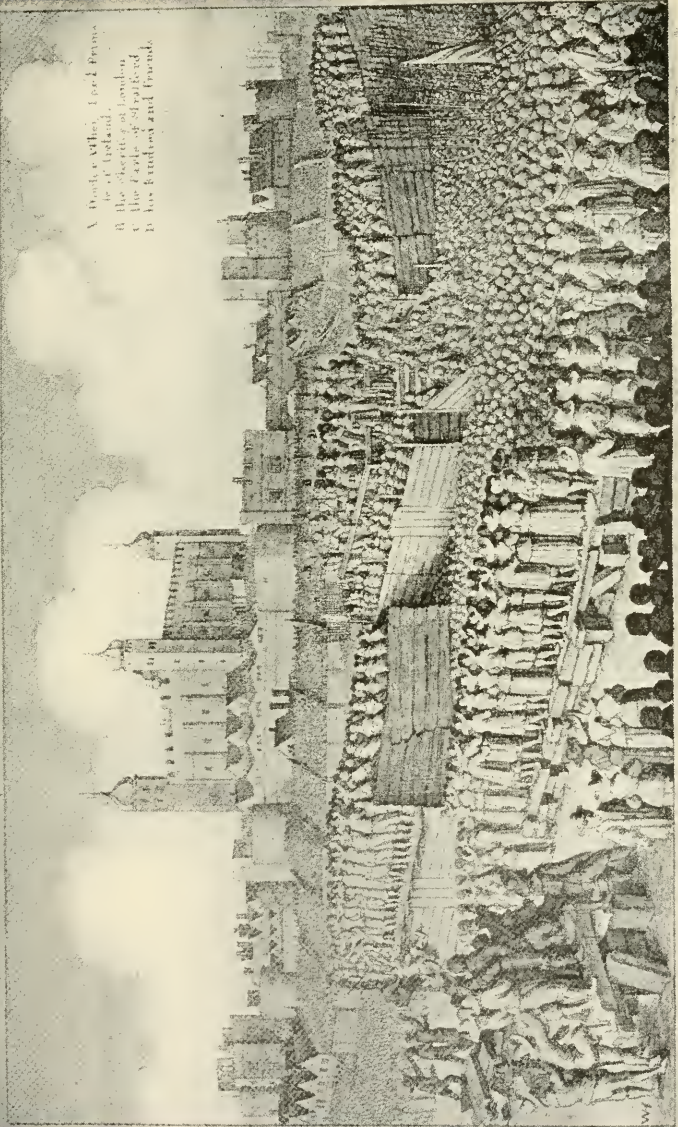
posed to include all opponents or dissenters to the reign of "Thorough" which Charles now instituted. To carry out his policies he had three stern and able men. The young Marquis of Hamilton represented him in Scotland; Wentworth, Earl of Strafford to be, governed Ireland with consummate skill and power; and Laud, the now spectacular Archbishop of Canterbury, was the right-hand man in England. Against dangerous men of special eminence this Prelate carried on a vindictive campaign. Prynne, the author of *Histrion-Mastix*, had his ears clipped on the public pillory, and then, still indomitable, lost the pitiful remnants of them and was branded on the cheeks "S. L." (Seditious Libeler). His revenge was to come. Bishop Williams of Lincoln, indiscreet even after his removal from power, was next fined a fortune and imprisoned at the King's pleasure, and mulcted of eight thousand pounds more for receiving without protest letters which referred to Laud as "the little vermin" and "the urchin." At the same time Puritan laymen, church wardens, itinerant lecturers, parish ministers, and curates—whoever in position of trust or authority deviated from the strict discipline of the established church—were shorn of power and subjected to fine or imprison-

ment. And finally a sort of guerilla warfare was carried on with the "ineradicable nests of Separatists sheltered in the recesses of London."

It is evident enough that this sort of game could not be played indefinitely. Sooner or later troubles were bound to gather round the head that wore the crown. Charles after more than eleven years of autocratic rule, began to feel the ground slipping from under him so perilously that in the spring of 1640 he reluctantly called a Parliament. He wanted twelve subsidies, but, as they obstinately preferred to discuss their country's grievances, after three weeks of deadlock he sent them to their homes. This desperate expedient soon turned out to be by no means a wise one; the Gordian knot was too tough even for such a stroke. The members of Parliament were not to be mocked by wanton assemblings and premature adjournments; they were to convene on their own call and to sit till their business was accomplished. Moreover, they were to determine what that business should be. And the needs of the nation, said Parliament, demanded the death of Wentworth, Earl of Strafford—the man, it was felt, in whom, more than in any other, was the source of danger to come. Strafford,¹

¹ For a vivid dramatic account of his last days read Browning's tragedy, *Strafford*.

THE TRUE MANNER OF THE EXECUTION OF THOMAS EARLE OF STRAFFORD LORD
Governor of Ireland, upon Tower-hill the 12th of May 1633



- A. Doctor Wilkes, Lord Primes
- B. the Earl of Strafford
- C. the Sheriff and Justice
- D. the Lord of Strafford
- E. his Friends and Friends

EXECUTION OF THE EARL OF STRAFFORD; TOWER OF LONDON
(From an engraving by W. Hollar)

foreseeing what was imminent, came with misgivings to London on the King's guaranty "that not a hair of his head should be touched." Almost immediately, however, he was imprisoned in the Tower, and then after five months, beginning in March, 1640-41, there followed the trial which was one of the most dramatic episodes enacted in Westminster Hall.

It was a royal stage for the enactment of a regal tragedy. The Hall was first built by William Rufus, son of the Conqueror. After a disastrous fire three centuries later, it was remodeled and enlarged during the closing years of Chaucer's life. Under its rafters had echoed the death sentences of William Wallace, Sir Thomas More, Lord Cobham, and Guy Fawkes. Here Cromwell, clothed in purple, scepter and Bible in hand, was to be declared Protector. Here, centuries later, Warren Hastings was to be acquitted; and from here within this same decade Charles was to follow Strafford to the executioner's block.

Picture the great stage at one end, furnishing a green-covered background for the Peers who sat as his judges in crimson and ermine; trellised rooms behind for the King and Queen and Ladies of the Court; the black-garbed prisoner in the middle of the Hall; and long tiers of lengthwise

seats filled with onlooking members of the House of Commons. Still as in the Courts of Elizabeth and James there was a strange commingling of gravity and indecorum.

Oft great clamour without about the doors. In the intervals, while Strafford was making ready for answers, the Lords got always to their feet, walked and clattered—the Lower House men too loud clattering; after ten hours much public eating, not only of confections but of flesh and bread—bottles of beer and wine going thick from mouth to mouth without cups; and all this in the King's eye.¹

The days wore on, toward the luckless prisoner's doom. Royal assurances were not fulfilled with royal fidelity. Charles, no weakling on many occasions, yielded this time to popular pressure.

The King was sorry; 'tis no shame in him;
Yes, you may say he even wept, Balfour,
And that I walked the lighter to the block
Because of it.²

So on Wednesday, the 12th of May, "that proud curly head, the casket of that brain of power, rolled on the scaffold on Tower Hill."

It was the beginning of the King's downfall. Before long he was at such loggerheads with Parliament that within a year the civil war was

¹ Quoted in Masson, *Life of Milton*, II, p. 180.

² Browning, *Strafford*, Act V, scene ii, ll. 200-203.

on. By 1646 he had taken refuge with the Scots, a refuge that soon resolved itself into a captivity from which he was never to be freed. He was with the Scots seven months and with the English two years as a royal prisoner before finally the trial was begun. Then again Westminster Hall was used. He who might have saved the life of Strafford could not save his own. It was in vain that he refused to accept the authority of the Court and that he attempted to speak when sentence had been pronounced. A scant week after he had impatiently heard the charges filed against him, he was hustled by the guards away to Whitehall and thence to St. James across the narrow Park. Three days later he walked back to Whitehall Banquet House and stepped from an enlarged window onto the platform where he surrendered his life.

So England became a republic, passing into a new era quite as troublous as that which she had just survived. Cromwell worked indefatigably with the Council of State and the little Rump¹ Parliament, until he was forced to carry on the

¹ "Right, knave," he said, "I taste thy jest. . . . Faustus raised the devil as the Parliament raised the army, and then, as the devil flies away with Faustus, so will the army fly away with the Parliament, or the rump as thou call'st it, or sitting part of the so-called Parliament."—Scott, *Woodstock*, chap. xviii.

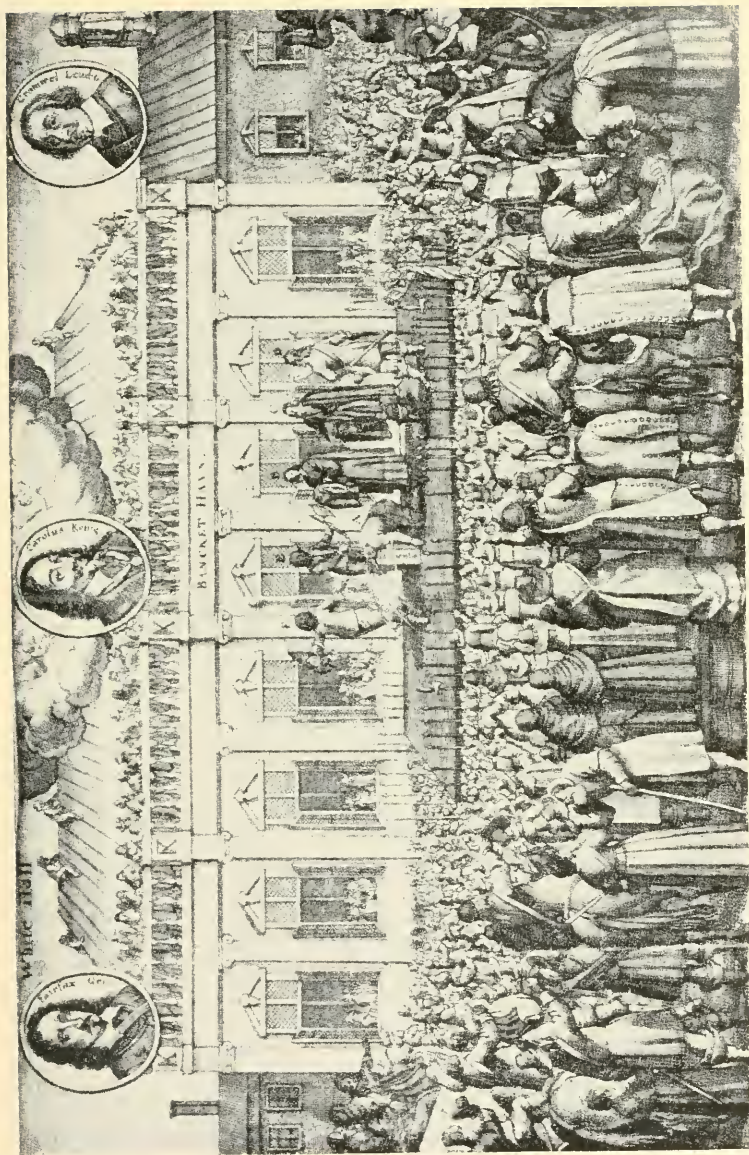
government almost single-handed. The young Charles was awkwardly successful in making friends. Proclamations of his succession to the Crown were read in Scotland and Ireland, and until he was invited to leave, his own court was for a while assembled at The Hague. A heavy fusillade of controversial pamphlets beclouded the air, Milton serving as literary champion of the Regicides, and replying to *Eikon Basilike* with his *Eikonoklastes* and to Salmasius' *Defensio Regis* with *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio*.

For the disorder and actual lawlessness of the times Macaulay has entered a contrite plea of "Guilty":¹

Major-generals fleeing their districts; soldiers reveling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and the hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy men shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag: all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

These were expressions of religious fanaticism venting itself against its enemies in the very hour

¹ This is in the "Essay on Milton," of which the latter half is especially interesting. In connection with this period his essays on Hampden and Bunyan are also valuable.



EXECUTION OF CHARLES I; BANQUET HOUSE, WHITEHALL.
(From a nearly contemporary Dutch engraving by Sebastian Furck)

of victory; but on the other hand this fanaticism was no less vigorous in its discipline of the victors.

Though the discipline of the church was at an end, there was nevertheless an uncommon spirit of devotion among people in the parliament quarters; the Lord's day was observed with remarkable strictness, the churches being crowded with numerous and attentive hearers three or four times in the day; the officers of the peace patrolled the streets, and shut up all publick houses; there was no travelling on the road, or walking in the fields, except in cases of absolute necessity. Religious exercises were set up in private families, as reading the Scriptures, family prayer, repeating sermons, and singing of psalms which was so universal, that you might walk through the city of London on the evening of the Lord's day without seeing an idle person, or hearing anything but the voice of prayer or praise from churches and private houses. . . . There were no gaming-houses, or houses of pleasure; no profane swearing, drunkenness, or any kind of debauchery.¹

The exalted vision that Milton had seen as early as 1644 must have seemed doubly assured in these years of triumph.

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long abused

¹ Neal, *History of the Puritans*, II, 553, 555.

sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.¹

Discontent increased steadily as the years wore on, the original adherents of the dead King gaining in power as the fear grew that the Rebellion had accomplished nothing more than the substitution of a Cromwell for a Stuart dynasty. Something even more unsatisfactory than that, however, was the real result; for England to her dismay found, in '58 and '59, after the death of the great Protector, that anarchy under Richard Cromwell was much less tolerable than despotism under Oliver. Those were days that tried men's souls. Some were in despair at the failure of the Commonwealth, some in an agony of hope that young Charles might be restored to his throne, and many in an ecstasy of doubt as to silence or speech, and as to what to say if speak they must. It is not a proud chapter in English literature which the poets of these years contributed.² William Davenant, Laureate up to 1649, wrote a ponderous greeting upon "his Sacred Majesty's

¹ Milton, "Areopagitica."

² See illustrative readings at the ends of chaps. iii and iv.

most happy return," of which the worst that can be said is that it is prosily sincere. Abraham Cowley, who had apparently reconciled himself to the subverted order of things, was laboriously lavish in his joy. But Edmund Waller and John Dryden were guilty of noisy effusions in spite of the fact that both of them had printed similar flatteries of Cromwell not long before. These wielders of the pen seemed to be able to clear off old scores rather easily. For the unliterary the job was not always so simple. The fears of Samuel Pepys lest some of his own past indiscretions should be quoted against him were doubtless the fears of hundreds of others who left behind them no such record as his fascinating diary.¹

It is a strange contrast with the last hours of Charles I which is provided by the splendid return of his son in 1660. For more than twenty miles through the countryside the road to London was lined with shouting multitudes "one continued street wonderfully inhabited."² At Blackheath fifty thousand soldiers greeted the King, and nearer the riverside the Lord Mayor and the city fathers. The entrance through the City followed

¹ Pepys' *Diary*, November 1, 1660.

² The last chapter of Scott's *Woodstock* contains a description of this return.

the familiar course across the Bridge, up Bishops-gate Street, and through Cheapside to Fleet Street, Temple Bar, and the Strand, ending finally at Whitehall, where, in that very Banquet House before which his father had lost his life, the houses of Parliament were now assembled to do honor to the son.

Yet now, as always, the silver-lined cloud was black beneath. If the trial of the elder Charles was, in its kindest aspect, the expression of a sort of desperate hysteria consecrated to a holy cause, the treatment of the regicides was horribly vindictive. Strange the reasonings which led to the deaths of many; awful the indignities and the tortures with which they were ushered out of life. Quixotic the arguments which led to the immunity of others; most marvelous of all the total escape of that blackest of rebels, John Milton. The escapes, however, were negative affairs. The trials and executions were positive and gruesomely spectacular events. It is a comparatively modern piece of social restraint which seeks to take life painlessly where life must be taken, and which conceals even the abbreviated spectacle of hanging or electrocution from the eyes of the curious and the morbid.

With these formalities over, came the corona-

tion, April 23, 1661, King Charles and St. George totally eclipsing the memory of Shakespeare, whose birthday it was. This was modern England; or rather on this recurrent occasion modern England still observes the traditions of the past. As far as the processions and ceremonies are concerned, out-of-door backgrounds excluded, photographs of the coronations of Edward VII or George V would give a reasonably approximate idea of what happened on that day. Charles in crimson velvet and ermine, the gorgeous crowd marshaled in Westminster Abbey, the rites performed by Dean, Bishops, and Archbishop contributed to a series of radiant pictures.

Of the kneelings and other religious services of prayer and song that followed, and the kissing of the Bishops by the King, and the homagings to the King by the Bishops and the Peers, and the changes of place and posture in the Abbey, and the proclamation of the King's general pardon by Lord Chancellor Clarendon and heralds, and the flinging of gold and silver medals about by the Treasurer of the Household . . . and the music from violins and other instruments by performers in scarlet with the bangs from the drums and the blasts from the trumpets, the reckoning becomes incoherent. People were tired of these fag-ends, and longed to be out of the Abbey.¹

What happened in the next few years is familiar enough. The new King had none of the private

¹ Masson, *Life of Milton*, VI, 158.

virtues of Charles I, and little of his strength. His own influence, unsupplemented by the general reaction against Cromwellian days, would have gone far toward debauching the court. It is a mistake to foster the idea that the vices of those days have passed from the earth, or England, or London. But it is not too much to say that, under royal auspices, vice and vicious luxury have seldom flourished more arrogantly than at that time. No wonder then that Milton, "old, poor, sightless, disgraced," pictured himself in *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes*. When he gloried in

A mind not to be changed by place or time,¹

and asked

What matter where, if I be still the same?²

he was writing, in stern defiance, two mottoes for himself. And in something approaching despair he dictated not of Samson alone:

Promise was that I
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves,
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke.³

¹ *Paradise Lost*, l. 253.

² *Ibid.*, l. 256.

³ *Samson Agonistes*, ll. 38-42.

From this time on, as completely as man could, Milton withdrew from contact with men and affairs. Yet it is difficult to believe that even now he was writing without reference to the court when he dictated

where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers
And injury and outrage; and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.

This, however, is the dark side of the picture. It could be dwelt on at length, and must be referred to in a later chapter. When we do return to it, it becomes interesting no longer as a political matter; for, though intensely exciting times were still to come, the social and artistic life of London emerged from now on to a state of independence where it may be regarded as an index which can be read without direct reference to statesman, warrior, or priest.

Now suddenly came the last great plague from which London was ever to suffer. The horrors of it are vividly described by Defoe in his *Journal of the Plague Year*.¹ From the first

¹ The fact that this was not an actual journal detracts little from the value of the work. Defoe was a Londoner, five or six years old at the time, and thus near enough to have drawn much material from those who survived the plague. There is, moreover, abundant evidence that he resorted to authoritative records.

beginnings in the winter of 1664-65 the dread disease made steady inroads, taking off increasing numbers from the original parishes to the north-west of the City, and spreading continually to wider areas. As summer approached the panic became general. The well to do were, of course, the first to flee.

Indeed, nothing was to be seen but waggons and carts, with goods, women, servants, children, etc.; coaches filled with people of the better sort, and horsemen attending them, and all hurrying away.¹

At the end of June minute directions concerning the care of the sick and dead, the cleaning of the streets, and the assembling of people were issued by the Lord Mayor.² Then as always the less serious-minded were so far from realizing how dire were their straits that certain regulations of a most surprising sort were made necessary. "Plays, bear-baitings, games, singing of ballads, buckler-play" were specifically prohibited, as were also, and not with entire success, public dinners and "disorderly tipping in taverns, ale-houses, coffee-houses, and cellars." In mid-July 700 died of the plague in one week. By the end of August the weekly mortality was over 6,000, and the first week in September nearly 7,000.

¹ Defoe, *History of the Plague*, Bohn ed., p. 6.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 29-36.

One result of such wholesale ravage was the complete demoralization of all who are ordinarily held in check by law or by public opinion. The practice of shameless quackery was accompanied by outrages on the part of nurses and caretakers, the pillaging of the dead, and the looting of abandoned houses and shops. Terror made men mad. Now and then acts of unselfish charity were recorded, but so seldom that they stand out in pathetic solitude.

Among other stories one was very passionate mephotought of the child of a very able citizen in Gracious Street, a saddler, who had buried all the rest of his children of the plague, and himself and wife now being shut up and in despair of escaping, did devise only to save the life of this little child; and so prevailed to have it received stark naked into the arms of a friend who brought it (having put it into new fresh clothes) to Greenwich; where upon hearing the story we did agree it should be permitted to be received and kept in town.¹

By the middle of September there was some abatement, which with slight fluctuations continued steadily until almost a year had elapsed, when in mid-May of 1666 the report for the week was only 53 deaths from the Plague. Even in

¹ Pepys' *Diary*, September 3, 1665. This is subject of a painting by Florence Reason, reproduced in Hutchings, *London Past and Present*, Vol. I, opposite p. 12.

August it was not yet rooted out. It held on till September of the second year, and then on the second day of the month—as if poor London had not suffered enough—there came a new affliction.

This was the great Fire, which within four days' time almost blotted out the old London inside the walls. Milton had escaped the Plague by taking refuge at Chalfont St. Giles, in the county of Bucks. It was a matter of physical expediency which he seems to have regarded as incidental though necessary, for he was more interested in "things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme" than in London's vicissitudes. Apparently he completed *Paradise Lost* and made a beginning of *Paradise Regained* during these very months. He returned to town before the Fire, yet he was spared immediate loss from this by the location of his residence at Artillery Walk, Bunhill fields, a few hundred yards north of Moorgate. Again his failure to "use" this striking calamity in any literary way emphasizes how completely remote he was from the objective affairs of his neighbors. "Plague and fire, what were they, after the ruin of the noblest of causes?"

The conflagration began on a Sunday night at Pudding Lane, in what was then East London, and was not stopped until four days later, when it

had consumed 436 acres, on which stood four City gates, eighty-nine churches, and 13,200 houses. By the second night, John Evelyn recorded,¹ the flames had reached St. Paul's, and were feeding on the scaffolds that he and other members of a commission had caused to be erected. Only six days before they had discussed a plan for complete repairs and alterations. Now the people were so overcome by despair that they made no intelligent effort to save homes or goods. Authorities were considering whether to pull down or blow up buildings in the path of the flames, while the distracted property-owners "hardly stirr'd to quench [them], so that there was nothing heard or seene but crying out and lamentation." The demon was now progressing with mad fury,

for ye heat with a long set of faire and warm weather had even ignited the aire and prepar'd the materials to conceive the fire, which devour'd after an incredible manner houses, furniture, and every thing. Here we saw the Thames cover'd with goods floating, all the barges and boates laden with what some had time and courage to save, as, on ye other, ye carts &c. carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strew'd with moveables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh the miserable and calamitous spectacle! such as happily the world had

¹ See John Evelyn's *Diary*, September 3-10, 1666.

not seene since the foundation of it, nor be outdon till the universal conflagration thereof. All the skie was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seene above 40 miles round about for many nights. . . . Thus I left it this afternoone burning, a resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. . . . London was, but is no more!

Thus was devastated a vast acreage from which the tottering ruins were not all cleared away for two years. Evelyn, ever ready in scheming public projects, "presented his Majesty with a survey of the ruins, and a plot for a new City,"¹ while the ashes were yet hot. Sir Christopher Wren was not far behind with another. The difficulty of adjudicating property rights, and the consequent failure to adopt either plan, resulted in a preservation of the old street lines; and on these, with the exception of the most extensive buildings, the City was substantially re-erected within four years.

The old London and the new; streets dating from almost immemorial times, flanked by buildings more beautiful and commodious than of yore; old parishes with new meeting-houses; old superstitions holding over into a new and more sophisticated age; staid and sober Londoners still possessed of their old Puritanism, mourning the glory of the days gone by. By 1674 Milton's London was a thing of the past.

¹See cut on p. 283.

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CHAPTER IV

DRYDEN'S LONDON

In 1666 London was in the condition of an athlete just after a long and exhausting struggle. The first moments following the ordeal reveal him as a primitive animal—a somewhat repulsive spectacle. He can do nothing, say nothing, until heart-beat and respiration have come down to normal. So in this long-suffering community could be seen traces of subsiding passion, while the physical city, twice struck down by acts of God, was beginning its stark and tremulous recovery from the Fire and the Plague.

In those very years when Milton was living in neglected obscurity, John Dryden, the great man of the Restoration period, was making rapid strides in a career of adroit self-adjustment which insured his eminence among his fellows. Born in 1631, if heredity had accounted for all his prejudices, he would have become a zealous Puritan. His schooling was under the famous Dr. Busby at Westminster, and his prolonged but far from brilliant university career, at Cambridge. It is said that he was at one time secretary to his fiery

cousin-german, Sir Gilbert Pickering, Lord Chamberlain to Oliver Cromwell. His own temporary allegiance to the Protector was emphatically recorded in the heroic stanzas on his death.¹ From these it appeared that Cromwell was instinctively a peace-lover who had been reluctantly drawn into the conflict; that though he was regardless of fame and fortune, "no winter could his laurels fade"; and that love and majesty blended in his mien. The modern student is inclined to estimate these observations as only slightly more accurate than his concluding prophecy, "His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest."²

In the ordinary course of events the subsequent patronage of his cousin Sir Gilbert and of his uncle Sir John Driden would doubtless have been useful to him. Not so under the circumstances; and when the great reversal came, the young poet managed to do very well without their help. Now he fell into that great middle group of Englishmen who had neither been secured by their devoted loyalty to the Stuarts, nor utterly endangered

¹ "Heroic Stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell," by John Dryden, 1659.

² "This day . . . were the carcasses of those arch rebels Cromwell, Bradshaw . . . and Ireton, dragged out of their superb tombs . . . to Tyburne, and hang'd on the gallows . . . and then buried under that fatal and ignominious monument in a deepe pitt."—Evelyn's *Diary*, September 30, 1661.

by the violence of their opposition; and, like the majority of this group, Dryden was after all not so much a coward or a weakling as a not abnormally self-interested commoner with a well-developed capacity for being reconciled to the existing order of things. As soon as the tide had clearly turned, he twice took occasion to express his profound satisfaction. As he was not writing lyric poetry he may have been able, without a twinge of conscience at the false implication, to record of Charles the undeniable fact that

For his long absence church and state did groan,
Madness the pulpit, faction seized the throne:
Experienced age in deep despair was lost,
To see the rebel thrive, the loyal crost.¹

Still feeling that, in behalf of himself and thousands like himself, some theory for the shift of allegiance should be offered, he stated in smooth measures that "the blessed change" stole on them so quietly that they felt the effect without seeing the manner of it. Even this explanation, which did not justify, left him so uncertain that when assurances of royal clemency were finally confirmed he set down what was probably

¹ "Astraea Redux, Poem on the Happy Restoration and Return of His Sacred Majesty, Charles II," ll. 21-25.

the most heartfelt line in either effusion when he wrote:

But 'tis our king's perfection to forget.¹

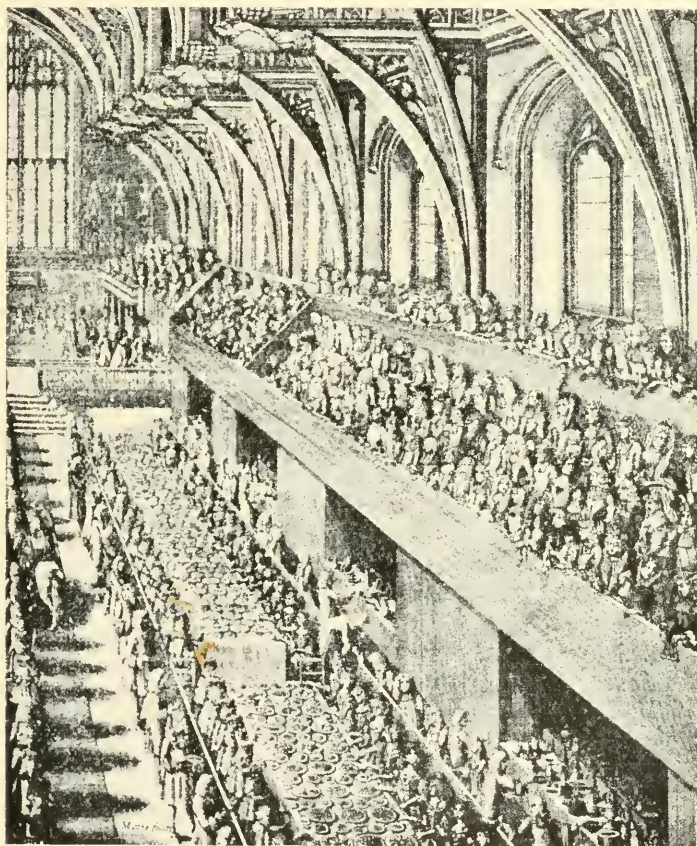
By 1666, as coming testimony of Pepys will show, Charles had forgotten. Flattery for pardon now gave way to adulation for patronage, which was seldom more grossly laid on than by the unblushing statement in "Annus Mirabilis (1666)" that

never prince in grace did more excel
Or royal city more in duty strove.²

This poem, however, brings us back to London "the Metropolis of Great-Britain, the most renowned and late flourishing City," to which it was dedicated with genuine enthusiasm. Its three hundred stanzas are full of eager loyalty, the first two-thirds of them rather prosily exulting in the recent naval victory over the Dutch, and the remainder in graphic verse telling of the Great Fire and the city's recovery from it. From the time of this tribute Dryden composed no significant poetry for fifteen years, giving his literary energy largely to playwriting. The restored

¹ "To His Sacred Majesty, A Panegyric on His Coronation," l. 89.

² "Annus Mirabilis, the Year of Wonders, MDCLXVI," stanza ccxli.



IN WESTMINSTER HALL

(From F. Sandiford. *Coronation of James II*, 1687)

theater is immensely important in any study of the Restoration period. It represents what the pleasure-lovers enjoyed and what all the rest at least tolerated.

The two men to whom we first turn for literary information are a pair of witnesses who can hardly be rivaled in any other generation. John Evelyn, who lived from 1620 to 1706 and kept a diary from 1641 until within a few weeks of his death, is the aristocrat of the two. He was a man of fortune much given to travel, particularly during the troublesome years from 1643 to 1652, and devoted whether at home or abroad to the pursuit of knowledge. His twenty-seven volumes are rarely found today even on the shelves of great libraries, though his imposing monographs on forestry, gardening, horticulture, architecture, sculpture, and engraving testify to his value as a commentator on the taste of his own generation. He was a faithful supporter of the Stuarts, opposed to the idea of revolution, and hardly less hostile to the vulgarities of the King's foes. At the same time he was a true Englishman in upholding royalty even though he disapproved of royal misbehavior. He was a personal counselor to three monarchs, a friend to the noblest born, and himself not a

Peer only because he preferred to retain his humbler rank as baronet.

Samuel Pepys, who during the latter part of his life was a close and cordial friend of Evelyn, rose by his own efforts to wealth, eminence, and—more rare than either of these—what seemed to be real culture. He was a young gentleman of direct ambitions and many useful friends. When there was no other help for it he resigned himself to the divinity that shapes our ends, but for the most part he was busied in shaping his own for himself, and not at all disposed to be content with rough-hewing them. His diary is a chronicle of only nine years of his life, ending when he was thirty-six, at which time failing eyesight made him abandon the use of the pen. In these years he was very different from John Evelyn. The difference in the content and style of their diaries is probably greater, however, than even the difference in their characters. For Evelyn wrote as with an eye to possible publication, and Pepys in a code which was not deciphered until a century and a half later. Evelyn's short jottings, covering over sixty years, bulk up to just about the volume of Pepys' minute reminiscences of a single decade. Evelyn wrote with the courtly compression of the English fine gentleman. Pepys, although struggling with a

multitude of duties, seemed when he took up his gossipy journal to loaf and invite his soul.

In a perfectly conventional way their London, which was Dryden's London, regarded itself as the most charming spot in the most superior land on earth. The country must exist, but only as a barbarous surrounding territory that performed the useful function of occupying space. One might go to it for a day, and on returning patronizingly quote Beaumont and Fletcher, "What sweet living 'tis in the country," or "Poor souls, God help 'em, they live as contentedly as one of us." Or students might retire from town for years, spending their lives in the libraries and lecture-rooms of the great universities. But to the arrogant Londoner there was no learning to match the lessons of city life, and no comfort or pleasure to equal what the crowded town could give. "I have vowed," says one of Thomas Shadwell's characters, "to spend all my life in London. People do really live nowhere else. They breathe and move, and have a kind of insipid dull being, but there is no life but in London. I had rather be Countess of Puddledock than Queen of Sussex."

The metropolis, of course, was steadily growing. Within the old walled inclosure population could be no thicker than it had been for a hundred years.

The main increase in the building-up of the town came in the continual broadening back from the river of the long connecting link between Temple Bar and Whitehall. A view of successive maps shows how this community developed from the time when there was a single row of houses along the Thames, past the period when Fleet Street and the Strand were flanked on both sides, up to the day when as far back as High Holborn and Oxford Street there was a solid community built up to the broad expanse of Hyde Park at the west. It may be remembered that among Milton's many residences some were just outside the western edge of the City. Dryden's chief residence and the one to which his name is most closely attached was on Gerrard Street in Soho, about a half-mile due north of Charing Cross. This was the proper vantage point for a critic of the times. He was in the mid-region between the Court and the City, roughly a mile north of the one and west of the other, and capable of viewing both without the sort of prejudice which might have embarrassed him had he been wholly identified with either.

To what Macaulay was in the habit of calling the "common observer," the town which Dryden admired and Shadwell extolled seemed to be a court-ridden London. While Parliament and the

judges were proceeding with their grim work of revenge upon the regicides, Charles was surrounded by a group who troubled themselves little with legislative and judicial affairs. The sordid vice of the day is an unedifying subject. Taine exults in the fact that England is thereby shown to be brutally inferior to France. Hamilton¹ enjoyed it. Pepys was at once shocked and fascinated by it. Evelyn, usually reticent, had nothing but disapproval to express when he mentioned it at all.

Pepys in his unconsciousness of posterity is doubtless the best source of data. With a fully developed appetite for gossip, he gathered whatever he could as he went his rounds. To be near the King or the Duke of York, particularly if one of their mistresses was by, made him all eyes and ears. Nasty happenings at dinners and balls were welcome grist for his mill; and yet it should be said that though he did not express disapproval of them, he did not dwell on them with any morbidity.² Evelyn, however, deplored whatever he recorded of this sort.³ The same character

¹ Author of the famous *Memoirs of Count Grammont*.

² See Pepys' *Diary* for January 1, 1662-63; February 8, 17, 1662-63; November 9, 1663; February 21, 1664-65; July 29, 1667; etc.

³ See Evelyn's *Diary*, for January 6, 1661-62; October 9-10, 1671; October 21, 1671.

who was a fascinating fine lady to Pepys was a "young wanton" in his vocabulary. When he found "ye jolly blades racing, dauncing, feasting, and revelling," he could not refrain from the addition, "more resembling a luxurious and abandon'd rout than a Christian court." Writing on the death of Charles, he concluded his account in honest grief:

I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and prophaneness, gaming and all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening) which this day se'ennight I was witness of, the King sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleaveland, and Mazarine, &c., a French boy singing love songs, in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the greate courtiers and other dissolute persons were at basset round a large table, a bank of at least 2000 in gold before them, upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflexions with astonishment. Six days after was all in the dust! It was enjoyn'd that those who put on mourning should wear it as for a father, in ye most solemn manner.¹

Profligacy, aside however, what else was of interest?

Probably there is no social trait of this generation more impressive in contrast to the present than the pervasive and characteristic rough-and-readiness which survived from the day

¹ Evelyn's *Diary*, February 4, 1684-85.

of James I.¹ This primitiveness appears, for instance, in the still crude ineffectiveness of the machinery of living. The same people who were in love with splendor on state occasions, and with qualified luxury for the few, had little idea of the almost effeminate completeness with which we of today protect ourselves from every discomfort. A simple white-plastered wall in the state that the paper-hanger finds it seemed a striking triumph of skill to Pepys. He was as impressed with a carriage with laminated springs as a high-wheel rider of the late 'eighties was at the first appearance of the safety bicycle with pneumatic tires. Evelyn was grateful one day when his daughter was thrown without injury completely out of her carriage by a lurch on a rough street in the city, but made no comment on the needless danger to which all vehicle-users were subjected. Benjamin Franklin's homely and sensible attention to the problems of street-paving, draining, and lighting was not to be applied for two full generations yet.

It was a primitive age in the degree of superstition with which its scanty science was encumbered.² The reign of Charles, notable in many

¹ See present volume, pp. 44 and 50-56 *passim*.

² For a full discussion of this, see Edward Eggleston, *Transit of Civilization*, chaps. i and ii.

respects, was not least so for the portents with which it was accompanied. The Plague was similarly preceded,¹ ominous prophets also foretelling its progress to the infinite fright of the hysterical.

This evening looking out of my chamber window towards the west, I saw a meteor of an obscure bright colour, very much in shape like the blade of a sword, the rest of the skie very serene and cleare. What this may portend God onely knows; but such another phenomenon I remember to have seene in 1640, about the triall of the greate Earle of Strafford, preceding our bloody rebellion. I pray God avert his judgments. We have had of late several comets, which tho' I believe appeare from naturall causes, and of themselves operate not, yet I cannot despise them. They may be warnings from God, as they are commonly forerunners of his animadversions.²

In such a generation it was not surprising that the study of alchemy was still pursued,³ that the King gravely practiced as a healer of King's Evil,⁴ and that the practice of medicine was still extraordinary in the violence of its application. On the 17th of April, 1648, Evelyn fell into a six days' illness, from which he finally began "to

¹ See Defoe, *History of the Plague*, Bohn ed., p. 17.

² Evelyn's *Diary*, December 12, 1680.

³ *Ibid.*, January 2, 1651-52.

⁴ *Ibid.*, July 6, 1660. This was still practiced as late as the boyhood of Dr. Johnson, 1710-20.

have ease by using the fumes of cammomile on embers applied to my eares after all physitians had don their best." And more than a dozen years later he received from Sir Kenelm Digby for a digestive cure "raine water of the Autumnal equinox exceedingly rectified, very volatile." Of course, little was known about the care of small children, and the infant mortality as recorded in London by Evelyn was no less dreadful than that of the same years in Boston as indicated in the diary of his contemporary, Judge Samuel Sewall. John Evelyn himself, with all his wealth and intelligence, lost four of his five sons in infancy.

Again, it was a kind of primitiveness which led to the overelaboration of dress that prevailed in Charles's court. Pepys, who was no more of a popinjay than plenty of other men of his generation and ours, showed the effect of the fashions upon himself in frequent entries.

This morning come home my fine camlet cloak, with gold buttons, with a silk suit, which cost me much money, and I pray God to make me able to pay for it.¹ This morning, my brother Tom brought me my jackanapes coat with silver buttons. It rained this morning, which makes us fear that the glory of this day will be lost.² This night W. Hewer brought me home from Mr.

¹ Pepys' *Diary*, July 1, 1660.

² *Ibid.*, July 5, 1660.

Pim's my velvet coat and cap, the first that ever I had.¹
 To Whitehall on foot, calling at my office to change
 my long black coat for a short one (long cloaks being now
 quite out).²

Pepys' early petition about paying his debts met with such response that he continued in successive extravagances, for which Providence and his own enterprise combined to foot the bills.

Yet the ingenuity of the King was not to be satisfied by simple elaborations of English dress. By 1666 affairs had come to such a point that he had resorted to the Orient for inspiration. The sober Evelyn approved of a costume "after ye Persian mode" because this satisfied his antipathy to the French, so that twelve days after the appearance of the King in Eastern fashion, he records of himself,

to London to our office, and now had I on the vest and surcoat and tunic, as it was call'd, for His Majesty had brought the whole Court to it. It was a comely and manly habit, too good to hold, it being not possible for us in good earnest to leave ye Monsieurs' vanity long.³

Charles, however, finally embarrassed by the ruling lavishness of the day, was for reforming it altogether by adopting a set and simple costume:

¹ Pepys' *Diary*, August 29, 1660.

² *Ibid.*, October 7, 1660.

³ Evelyn's *Diary*, September 18 and 30, 1666.

“A long cassock, close to the body, of black cloth, and pinked with white under it, and the legs ruffled with black rib and like a pigeon’s leg a very fine and handsome garment.” And the fashion stood—until the King of France, by way of a left-handed compliment, adopted it for his footmen!

It would be wrong perhaps to refer to the still vigorous love of pageantry as an evidence of primitiveness. Yet in general, enjoyment of this sort among the northern peoples seems to wane with the advance of years. New Orleans, Madrid, and Venice preserve what London has lost, the great festivals of today being merrily carried through by southern folk, who are viewed by a surrounding crowd of sober witnesses descended from the top of the map to look on at what they have forgotten how to enjoy.

In Pepys one would, of course, expect to find much attention given to the pomp and ceremony of state occasions, but Evelyn is not far behind. On January 1, 1661-62, he accepted an invitation to “the solemn foolery of the Prince de la Grange at Lincoln’s Inn, where came the King, Duke, etc.” On August 23 of the same year he was spectator at the triumphal welcome of the new queen on the Thames. “His Majestie and the

Queene came in an antiq-shap'd open vessell, cover'd with a state or canopy of cloth of gold, made in the form of a cupola, supported with high Corinthian pillars, wreath'd with flowers, festoons, and garlands. I was in our new-built vessell sailing amongst them." November 27 it was the entrance of the Russian ambassador with his suite, which drew all London into the streets. In October, 1664, the Lord Mayor's triumph by water and land was "ye most magnificent," the lavish feast at the Guildhall costing £1,000. At one time it is the ceremonial of the Knights of the Garter, at another the presentation of a masque at Court, at another still a royal birthday. Some of these events survive, but the difference which impresses the reader is in the degree of oppressive solemnity¹ with which, as early as the late eighteenth century, stateliness had begun to surround itself.

It was a crude age in point of food and drink, people consuming incredible quantities. Pepys was frequently fuddled, and not seldom witness or aid in the case of a friend who needed to be helped home, or carried to bed from his own dining-room. A lady who drank a pint and a half of canary almost at a single draught excited no

¹ See W. D. Howells, *London Films*, 1905, chap. iii, on "Shows and Side-Shows of State."

great comment. The amount of meat and game eaten was quite in proportion—the service not so impressive as the quantity. Pepys exclaimed at “my Lord Barkshire waiting on table, and serving the King drink, in that dirty pickle as I never saw man in my life”;¹ and Grammont listened as the King called attention to the fact he was served kneeling in sign of especial respect, only to reply: “I thank your Majesty for the explanation. I thought they were begging pardon for giving you so bad a dinner.”

The age was crude, too, in the unrefinement of its manners. The singing at divine service was once so bad that the King laughed aloud, and the sermons often so dull that the courtiers amused themselves in open and arrant flirtations. Pepys was one time annoyed at the theater because his coat was soiled by a lady in front of him who spat over her shoulder, but he was consoled on seeing that she was pretty. Pleasure in the company of attractive women was very likely to lead him into a genial romp with them. They were so lovely he wanted to muss them up; and he did it, apparently to their delight.

Naturally among men the prevailing roughness of demeanor led—in the conduct of the brutal element which nowadays is held under control,

¹ Pepys' *Diary*, July 25, 1666.

sometimes by the dictates of respectability and sometimes by the fear of law—to acts of amazing violence. In almost every man or woman there exist some faint survivals of the primitive passion for smashing. It is quite evident in children of the cheap-toy age. For the benefit of adults, though it is usually repressed, it is sometimes dignified and institutionalized as in the case of Hallowe'en, or the American baggage-handler. The invention of glass has been useful in offering opportunities for smashing to every level of society from the stratum of beveled mirrors and table ornaments down to the riffraff who feed on the destruction of shop windows and street lamps. But the practices of seventeenth-century England serve to expose and emphasize the miserable limitations of the present. The followers of Cromwell had been sating this appetite when they justified Samuel Butler in calling them:

Such as do build their faith upon
 The holy text of pike and gun,
 Decide all controversy by
 Infallible artillery;
 And prove their doctrine orthodox
 By apostolic blows and knocks;
 Call fire and sword and desolation
 A godly, thorough reformation.¹

¹ Butler, "Hudibras," Part I, ll. 195-202. See entire passage, ll. 191-230.

The kind of controversy which was decided by blows and knocks was not confined simply to religious disputants. In connection with literary differences of opinion there was the same semi-barbarous violence. The general inclination of men who were arguing in print about some matter of artistic judgment was to "do their opponents up," and their methods for gaining victory included not only argument on the question at stake but personal comment on the mental equipment of their opponents and upon any characteristic or fact connected with their lives and careers that might tend to embarrass them. Dryden is writing with only ordinary vigor when he refers to certain opponents as "wretched scribblers" and says that he wishes "to be hated by them and their fellows for the same reason for which" he desires to be loved by his patron.

Of course the Restoration roysterers were not to be outdone by Puritan iconoclasts. They could confidently match the destruction of ecclesiastical carvings, statuary, and windows by the wantonness with which they made the streets at night as dangerous as any brigand-harried pass. It was their time and place to avenge injury or insult as well as to seek after casual adventure, and the court followers were so far committed to this

sort of conduct that the slight murmur of disapproval which followed a notable outrage was drowned in the chorus of derision which hailed the victim. When Dryden, on his way home from Will's Coffee-house on an evening in 1679, was beaten by ruffians, the disgrace fell on the poet rather than on the Earl of Rochester, who was supposed to have instigated the attack. Perhaps posterity has exaggerated the wanton violence of the young bucks of these days. Sir Walter Besant says so, even while he quotes from Gay's "Trivia":

Who has not trembled at the Mohock's name?
Was there a watchman took his hourly rounds,
Safe from their blows or new-invented wounds?
I pass their desperate deeds and mischief's done,
Where from Snow-hill black steepy torrents run;
How matrons, hoop'd within the hogshead's womb,
Were tumbled furious thence.¹

It should not for a moment be assumed that the basic qualities of a London with these surface manners were different from those of Puritan days. The real distinction between one generation and another is nothing more than a matter

¹ Gay, "Trivia, or The Art of Walking the Streets of London," Part III, ll. 326-32. Shadwell's *The Scowlers* (1691), corroborates Gay. See in detail *Society Sketches in the Eighteenth Century* by Norman Pearson, chap i, "The Scowlers and Mohocks."

of emphasis. Such a distinction is comparable to the discovery of differences between children of the same parents. From the maternal point of view there is nothing but contrast in temperament; to the casual visitor, little but similarity in feature, voice, and carriage. At a distance of more than two centuries from this epoch the historical stranger can still see persisting in it the same two elements which threatened England in 1600 and disrupted it in 1650, now once more contiguous but by no means recemented together. Their very distribution over the city is significant. To the west and south of Charing Cross was a community which might complacently adopt as its standard Etherege's measure of quality when he wrote:

A gentleman out to dress well, dance well, fence well, have a talent for love letters, a pleasant voice in á room, to be always very amorous, sufficiently discreet, but not too constant.¹

But east of Whitehall in the old City the stubborn survival of the unreconstructed Puritan was a very evident fact. It is always harder, of course, for the loser to forget. The consolations of victory and prosperity are subtle aids to the healing work of time. So, the exhuming of Cromwell, Bradshaw,

¹ *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*, Act I.

and Ireton¹ was to the defeated minority a bitter reminder of their splendid burials² not many years before. The reopening of the theaters and the reintroduction of bear-baiting were not beheld with merely silent protest. The Puritan of the period could hardly be indifferent to the shouts of delight which rewelcomed the historic caricature of himself in *Bartholomew Fair*, when that play was put on the stage after a lapse of a quarter-century. On the other hand, the venom of old days was sometimes on the tongues of the victors. As late as 1672 the reproach of Restoration days was still held over such a valiant naval officer as Lord Sandwich;³ and a dozen years after this the hardest blow that any of Dryden's many enemies could strike was a reprint of his own earlier lines to Cromwell.

The reopening of the theaters, after eighteen years of almost complete inactivity, came as a matter of course in 1660. All the chief playhouses of Elizabethan times had passed into disuse, and

¹ Evelyn's *Diary*, September 30, 1660.

² *Ibid.*, March 6, 1651; October 22, 1658.

³ *Ibid.*, May 31, 1672; "He had, I confesse, serv'd the tyrant Cromwell when a young man, but t'was without malice, as a souldier of fortune; and he readily submitted, and that with joy, bringing an entire fleet with him from the Sound, at ye first tidings of his Majestie's restauration."

most of them had been destroyed. With the organization of two new companies, the King's Theater was early erected in Drury Lane, near Charing Cross north of the Strand, and the Duke's Theater at Lincoln's Inn Fields, a short distance to the north and east. At the outset the play itself was adapted or designed to fit the Restoration audience. For this audience from the very first the theaters seem to have been improved in a physical way. Says Pepys:

The stage is now . . . a thousand times better and more glorious than ever heretofore. Now wax candles, and many of them; then not above 3 lbs. of tallow: now, all things civil, no rudeness anywhere; then, as in a bear garden: then, two or three fiddlers; now, nine or ten of the best: then, nothing but rushes on the ground, and everything else mean; and now all otherwise: then, the Queen seldom, and the King would never come; now, not only the King only for state, but all civil people do think they may come as well as any.¹

Possibly one result of the use of many candles was the change in the opening hour from three to six in the afternoon. At any rate by Addison's time the shift had come, so that the member of the Inner Temple in the Spectator's Club started at five to have his "shoes rubbed and his periwig powdered," before taking a turn at Will's until

¹ Pepys' *Diary*, February 12, 1666-67.

the play began at the Drury Lane Theater.¹ By Addison's time, too, more playhouses had sprung up—at Covent Garden, the Haymarket, the Opera House, and Goodman's Fields.

Yet all of this machinery was devoted to a degenerate stage which, even in the reigns of William and Mary and of Anne, still felt the noxious influence of Charles II. All the material for drama was lavishly supplied. The romantic variety of loosely disciplined life, the strong contrast between opposing social elements, the splendor of town and court, the picturesque and tragic memories of such national disasters as the Plague and the Fire, the background of recurrent and always imminent struggle with rival nations on the Continent; leisure, culture, and a taste for writing—all of these might have combined into the making of a great drama had there been any genuinely deep social impulse toward such an end. But there was not.

During the first year of the reopened theater the overwhelming majority of plays attended by Pepys came from Elizabethan authorship. He saw *Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Middleton's *The Changeling* once and Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Scornful Lady* many times.

¹ *Spectator*, No. 2.

Sir William Davenant seems to have been the first of the new generation to attract his attention more than once. Yet of the first seventeen plays noted in a casual jotting of the performances seen in the year following August, 1660, only two of them are of Restoration authorship. Dryden's successful play-writing does not begin before 1664, and of this the melancholy fact must be recorded that he wrote down to the level of the day not only in the manner but in the matter of his plays. He might have said of all his dramatic work what he did about the subject for one panegyric, "I swam with the tide, and the water under me was buoyant."¹

Under the circumstances there was little to be hoped for from the subsequent satire of Wycherley, "the sparkling dialogue and fine raillery of Congreve, the frank nature and admiration of Vanbrugh, the manifold inventions of Farquhar." Though the playhouses thrived, this same verdict was rendered among thinking contemporaries. Jeremy Collier in a tremendous attack followed up Prynne's assault of two generations earlier.²

¹ Letter to the Earl of Abingdon prefatory to *Eleanora*, dedicated to the memory of the Countess of Abingdon.

² Collier, "Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the Stage," 1698.

And Addison in his negative way seemed to express disapproval. Look over his *Spectator* papers for his opinions on the theater. I have just run through two hundred of them as a test. He refers often to the Italian Opera, and he devotes one short series to a discussion of classical tragedy; not a word of contemporary plays and playwrights.

It is hard to say anything of the great controversial satires of 1681 without becoming lost in a maze of political details. By this year Charles was in the toils between the rival factions led by the Duke of Monmouth and Shaftesbury. To deal with this situation, to make himself strong with the King and his party, and to handle the whole problem in terms of that effective pseudo-biblical satire which had already been experimented upon by a predecessor, was as natural and easy for Dryden as it had been earlier to succeed in the popular play, or as it was for him later to be pre-eminent in the already well-established field of translation from the classics. His power of portraiture and of brisk analysis presented political London in permanent literary satire. The zealous partisanship of Shaftesbury's followers and their adoption of a medal when he was freed from the Tower gave Dryden the opportunity for a second work, *The Medal*, a satire

against sedition. The second part of *Absalom and Achitophel* continued his treatment of the political situation, and these with the others that followed, notably, of course, *The Hind and the Panther* in 1687, round out a series which are as interesting to one who has the historic background for them, as they are mystifying to the reader who hopes to get some pleasure from a casual perusal of them. Their strength is their weakness—their complete dependence upon a knowledge of the immediate problems with which they dealt.

In the last half of Dryden's lifetime London life was being carried on amid new architectural surroundings. After the Great Fire, schemes for the rebuilding of the city on less casual lines were promptly presented by many, the most important coming from Evelyn and Wren. The attitude of modern Londoners toward the fact that all these plans were rejected depends on whether they are most inclined to rejoice in the survival of old street lines, or to lament the absence of Parisian regularity in the lay of the land. In a way, however, even though one man's unified design was not to be imposed on the vast destroyed acreage, one man's genius stamped itself on the rebuilt town. For Christopher Wren, indefatigable as Rubens on canvas or Grinling Gibbons in wood-carving,

was soon made "surveyor general and principal architect for rebuilding the whole city; the cathedral church of St. Paul; all the parochial churches . . . with other public structures." For forty years he worked incessantly. He accomplished enough to have satisfied an average man in his work as surveyor of Westminster, in his additions to Windsor Castle, and his achievements at Oxford, Cambridge, and elsewhere; but meanwhile he designed and carried to conclusion the monument commemorative of the Fire, the new St. Paul's, fifty-two parish churches, thirty of the companies' halls, and many private houses. Except in deliberate perversity one cannot walk for five minutes in any neighborhood between Charing Cross and the Tower, the River and London Wall or Holborn, without encountering one or more of these buildings. The thousands of shops and dwellings that sprang up during these years were of a new sort. The old timbered overhanging houses, enriched by a multiplicity of lines and ornaments, were replaced with severely regular structures of stone, brick, or plaster. Here and there, as at Staple Inn on Holborn, or the Inner Temple Gate House, the older types yet stand; but, for the most part, the angular rectitude of Gerrard Street, as Dryden



ST. BRIDE'S, FLEET STREET
(Christopher Wren, architect)
(From a photograph)



ST. MARY LE BOW
(Christopher Wren, architect)
(From a photograph)

used to know it, is today indicative of what had become the new order of things.

The steady growth of the city had brought its population to three-quarters of a million by 1700. London now included in the almost wholly rebuilt section "a lawyer's quarter from Gray's Inn to the Temple; a quarter north of the Strand occupied by coffee-houses, taverns, theaters, a great market, and the people belonging to these places." Outside, to the east and north of the Tower, was a workman's quarter at Whitechapel, and to the west an aristocratic quarter bounded by the City, Westminster, Hyde Park, and Oxford Street. On the other side of the river, between London Bridge and St. George's, was a busy High Street with streets left and right; and the river bank was lined with houses from Paris Garden to Rotherhithe. Already London had become, as it is today, an aggregation of towns each with its own individuality, the list by 1700 totaling forty-six besides the City and Westminster.

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CHAPTER V

ADDISON'S LONDON

If the London of 1666 was in the condition of an athlete after a long struggle, the London of 1700 was in the state of mind of a man-about-town after a night's dissipation—seriously inclined toward a thoughtful examination of its own conduct. This mood was the natural consequence of a half-century of reckless living. The thinking people of these fifty years, of whom there had been no lack, had been a neglected minority. In the midst of what was beyond peradventure a boisterous and unreflective age *Pilgrim's Progress* had appeared, but the fact remains that *Pilgrim's Progress* was an index, not to all England, but only to what was at the time an inconsiderable fraction. It was not till 1710 or so that England began to give heed to its ways. The change was neither complete nor sudden; such changes never are. It was generations later before the supreme literature came to have a deeply spiritual significance; but literature, even in Addison's day, and largely owing to his influence, was elevated and dignified in comparison with what had gone before, though

it was superficial in contrast with what was to follow.

As the generation became more thoughtful, it became less capricious. A literary reading public began for the first time to develop. The ultimate result of this widening attention to literature was to be an enormously important one, for in the course of a hundred years the public was to provide such a consistent market for decent literary effort that the old literary patron was to be quite superseded. The first consequence, however, of the more extensive popularity of literature was to stimulate the patrons to increased generosity. The gentleman of wealth and position who becomes the backer of any sort of artist, exercises this kind of patronage more often than not with a view to his own reputation. Under the circumstances the inducement is greater when public attention is greater, and at the beginning of the eighteenth century the onlooking public was very ready to applaud.

Literary patronage could express itself in various ways. It might do so by direct gift of money or by the provision of board and lodging for a needy writer; again, it might secure state appropriations or appointments for deserving authors; or it might bestir itself to enlist advance

subscriptions for a forthcoming work from members of the inner circle. Thus it was that Pope through the guaranteed sales of his translation of the *Iliad* made a fortune—the first achieved by any English author unconnected with the stage. Swift had to content himself with power instead of office. Says Bishop Kennet, in a passage which Thackeray quotes:

When I came to the ante-chamber [at Court] to wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak to his brother, the Duke of Ormond, to get a place for a clergyman. He was promising Dr. Thorold to undertake with my Lord Treasurer, that he should obtain a salary of 200 *l.* per annum as member of the English Church at Rotterdam. He stopped F. Gwynne, Esq., going in to the Queen with the red bag, and told him aloud, he had something to say to him from my Lord Treasurer. He took out his gold watch, and telling the time of day, complained that it was very late. A gentleman said he was too fast. "How can I help it," says the Doctor, "if the courtiers give me a watch that won't go right?" Then he had instructed a young nobleman, that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope (a Papist), who had begun a translation of Homer into English, for which he would have them all subscribe: "For," says he, "he shall not begin to print till I have a thousand guineas for him." Lord Treasurer, after leaving the Queen, came through the room beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him—both went off just before prayers.¹

¹ See Thackeray's essay on Swift in *English Humourists*.

Various other men of talent were place-holders. Steele occupied four different offices in the gift of the state. Gay was Secretary to the Earl of Clarendon; John Dennis had a place in the Custom House. Prior and Tickell were both, among other holdings, Under Secretaries of State. Addison's record reads like the *Who's Who* of a modern cabinet minister: "Commissioner of Appeals; Under Secretary of State; Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; Keeper of the Records in Ireland; Lord of Trade; and one of the principal Secretaries of State." All these offices he held without doubt because he deserved to hold them; but he gained these offices because he had gained the ear of London.

Yet it is misleading to use such phrases as "the ear of London" and "the reading public" without a caution; for compared with today's, the literature of the early eighteenth century was strikingly undemocratic in subject-matter and in appeal. In fact, the new didactic poetry and prose were less genuinely popular than the degenerate drama whose place they usurped. A lawyer's clerk was much more likely to buy a ticket to *The Wild Gallant* than a copy of the *Epistle to Arbuthnot* or an issue of the *Spectator*. Addison, with all his social effectiveness, was never better described

than as "a parson in a tye-wig." Listen to him as he preaches: "Let not imprudence get the better of modesty." "Avoid foolish superstitions." "Discourage the habit of duelling." "Eat and drink with measure." "Remember that happiness is of a retired nature, an enemy to pomp and noise." "Be kindly in speech." "Seek innocent diversions, enjoy friendship, cultivate the arts." These are good, sound, wholesome, and inoffensive doctrines. Nor was he alone. Steele, rake among scholars, wrote *The Christian Hero*. Pope composed hundreds of felicitous couplets on man, nature, poetry, and criticism—perfectly obvious comments that for generations no one had thought to make. Swift in vitriolic outbursts was doing a similar thing in an utterly different way. Life for most men was becoming a gentler and more sophisticated affair. People were discovering that in the tense experience of living with each other, noise and tumult were not indispensable.

The product of Pope and Addison and their followers was thus a polite literature. It was fashioned after classical models and based upon "a little learning." Dealing with an objective life which was unreal and artificial, it was written usually about the privileged few and always for them. Gay's *Beggar's Opera* was an entertain-

ment, his *Shepherd's Week*, which introduced nominal English peasants, was put out as a set of burlesques, his references to common street scenes and characters in "Trivia" were developed for purposes of contrast. Pope's audience was the *beau monde* from which he drew his material. His woods and fields and streams and the pastoral people, who composed elegant verses in the midst of them, were for the most part literary figments; and his chief narrative poem¹ had to do with a petty society squabble, which, with adroit elaboration, he dignified out of all proportion to its human significance.

Again, the range of vision of the *Spectator* was most narrowly circumscribed. One can search long through his essays without finding an allusion to any fact or person unconnected with the England of privilege or culture. The crowded state of the professions, the opera, undue party zeal, woman's headdress—evergreen topics of this not very profound type he passed in review. In any age they would make for conversation. There were special reasons why they did so in the early eighteenth century.

It was said of Socrates that he brought Philosophy down from heaven to inhabit among men; and I shall be

¹ "The Rape of the Lock."

ambitious to have it said of me that I have brought Philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses.¹

In other words said Addison, "I shall see that literature is interesting not only to wits and scholars, but to all others who have leisure and money. Of course, no sane man could expect me to take any reckoning of the 'masses.'"

The most remarkable social products of this generation were the coffee-house and the club, both of which, starting many years earlier, came to highest popularity and to ultimate decline from their original forms in the first half of the eighteenth century. Coffee came to England nearly a century later than tobacco. On May 10, 1637, John Evelyn writing of one Nathaniel Conopios, a Greek, says, "He was the first I ever saw drink coffee, which custom came not into England until thirty years after." The earliest two coffee-houses in England were established in 1652 and 1656, the second, James Farr's,² being complained against as a nuisance on account of the "evil smells" and the danger from his fire which he kept "for the most part night and day." The

¹ See *Spectator*, No. 10.

² For the remaining citations in this paragraph I am indebted to an unpublished manuscript by Professor Frank C. Lockwood.

drink was recommended by the accomplished people who first affected it on the grounds of its extraordinary powers as a stimulant. There was more or less controversy about it. But more important than any discussions of the potion itself were the comments which were made concerning its social influence. Certain protectors of home industries soon objected on the grounds that the use of it was interfering with the beer industry and hence with native agriculture; and in 1674 a broadside appeared under the title, *The Women's Petition against Coffee*, a protest asserting that coffee drinking encouraged idling and talkativeness and led men to "trifle away their time, scald their chops, and spend their money all for a little base, black, thick, nasty, bitter, stinking, nauseous puddle-water." For a custom prevalent enough to arouse such hostility as this, defenders were not wanting. Already in a bit of doggerel of 1667 it had been said

So great a Universitie
I think there ne'er was any,
In which you may a scholar be
For spending of a penny.

Yet it remained for Professor John Houghton of Cambridge in his *Coffee House Vindicated* to rise to highest superlatives in his conclusion that "the

coffee-house is the sanctuary of health, the nursery of temperance, the delight of frugality, an academy of civility, and free school of ingenuity."

Numerous illustrations survive which give an idea as to the interior of such a house. The neatly sanded floor, the bare-topped tables, the pictures and the plate, the trim hostess at her counter, the open fire with the kettle humming over it, all suggest comfort and leisure; and the prints which are more frequently seen give evidence that the pipes and coffee were only incidental to the real business of the patrons, which was talk. The nearest survival in London today, aside from certain self-consciously antiquated taverns like "The Cheshire Cheese," is the modest chop house, which is a feature of many unpretentious business districts.¹ Here one still finds the straight benches and uncovered tables, the newspapers well-thumbed and sometimes not innocent of food, and the general talk among groups of patrons, who are evidently familiar with the establishment, the waiters, and each other. And the prices are old-fashioned in their modesty.

Admission to the coffee-house cost a penny, and a cup of tea or coffee, twopence. For regular

¹ One of the best illustrations is Snow's Chop House in Glass House Lane off Piccadilly Circus.

individual patrons special rates were reserved and for groups of friends special tables or even rooms. As gazettes and other journals were subscribed for at the houses, there was ground for the apparently extraordinary estimate of Addison that each number of the *Spectator* was seen by twenty readers. But interchange of opinions, rather than isolated reading, was the glory of the coffee-house. Since genuine conversation could best thrive only among men of kindred minds, it developed that most of the houses automatically became centers of informal clubs. Practically all of the active-minded men of the day frequented, and so "belonged to," from one to four of these open congresses. The groups which regathered from day to day gave character to the places they patronized, and many of them became identified with some leader, who by virtue of his powers of talk not only controlled the discussions but actually insured the prosperity of the establishment. Thus Dryden dominated Will's, and Addison in a very different manner held mild sway over the "club" at Button's.

How birds of differing feathers did their flocking to the various resorts has been well set down by the author of *A Brief and Merry History of Great Britain*:

At those Coffee-houses, near the Court, called White's, St. James's, William's, the conversation turns chiefly upon *Equipages, Essence, Horse-Matches, Tupces, Modes* and *Mortgages*; the Cocoa-Tree upon *Bribery* and *Corruption, Evil Ministers, Errors and Mistakes in Government*; the Scotch Coffee-houses toward Charing Cross, on *Places* and *Pensions*; the Tilt Yard and Young Man's on *Affronts, Honour, Satisfaction, Duels, and Rencounters*. . . . In those Coffee-houses about the Temple the subjects are generally on *Causes, Costs, Demurrers, Rejoinders, and Exceptions*; Davids', the Welch Coffee-house in Fleet Street, on *Births, Pedigrees, and Descents*; Child's and the Chapter, upon *Glebes, Tithes, Advowson's, Rectories, and Lectureships*; . . . Hamlin's, *Infant Baptism, Lay-Ordination, Free Will, Election, and Reprobation*; . . . and all those about the Exchange, where the Merchants meet to transact their affairs, are in a perpetual hurry about *Stock-jobbing, Lying, Cheating, Trick-ing Widows* and *Orphans*, and committing Spoil and Rapine on the Publick.¹

¹ See *Spectator*, No. 1: "I have passed my latter years in this city, where I am frequently seen in most public places, though there are not above half a dozen of my select friends that know me; of whom my next paper shall give a more particular account. There is no place of general resort wherein I do not often make my appearance: sometimes I am seen thrusting my head into a round of politicians at Will's, and listening with great attention to the narratives that are made in those little circular audiences; sometimes I smoke a pipe at Child's, and, while I seem attentive to nothing but the Postman, overhear the conversation of every table in the room. I appear on Sunday nights at St. James's Coffee-house, and sometimes join the little committee of politics in the inner room, as one who comes there to hear and improve. My face is likewise very well known at the Grecian, the Cocoa Tree, and in the theatres both of Drury Lane and the Haymarket."

Most famous of them all in Dryden's day had been Will's, in Russell Street, Covent Garden. It was of his scant experiences here that Claude Halcro, the minstrel of Scott's *The Pirate*, was never tired of telling.¹ But with the reign of Addison a new house, Button's just across the way, was the favorite. The shift of supremacy is referred to in a play which was produced in 1714, the year after it was founded:²

True Wit: Just as it was, I find when I used Will's; but, pray sir, does that ancient rendezvous of the Doux Esprits hold its ground? And do men now, as formerly, become Wits by sipping Coffee and Tea with Wycherley and the reigning poets?

Freeman: No, no; there has been a great revolution in this state of affairs since you left us; Button's is now the established Wits' Coffee-house, and all the young scribblers of the times pay their attendance nightly there, to keep up their pretensions to sense and understanding.

If tradition is sound, Pope was among those who had seen both monarchs on their thrones, Dryden when as a little boy he one day was brought up to town, and Addison on many later occasions; but Pope was not made for a coffee-house career. He was an invalid and could not stand the pace; and he was irascible and could not stand the informal

¹ See *The Pirate*, chap. xii, latter half.

² *The New Rehearsal*, by Gildon.

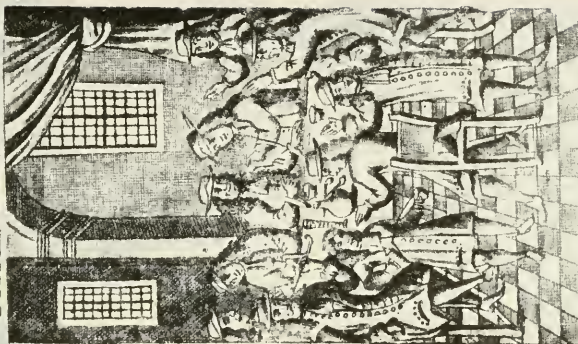
give and take of general company. Jealousy and suspicion kept him in a succession of quarrels. One of them with Ambrose Phillips, "a pastoral tartar," came to an inconclusive climax at Button's. Years before Phillips and Pope had each written a set of pastorals which appeared in the same volume of *Tonson's Miscellany*. Out of the differences between the two and the comments of the critics, Pope's pertinacity had bred complications which involved not only the original pair but Addison and Steele and Gay as well. As a letter of Colley Cibber's proves, the little fire kindled in 1709 smoldered along for years:

When you used to pass your hours at Button's, you were even then remarkable for your satirical itch of provocation; scarce was there a gentleman of any pretension to wit, whom your unguarded temper had not fallen upon in some biting epigram, among which you once caught a pastoral tartar, whose resentment, that your punishment might be proportionate to the smart of your poetry, had stuck up a birchen rod in the room, to be ready whenever you might come within reach of it; and at this rate, you writ and rallied and writ on, till you rhymed yourself quite out of the coffee-house."¹

If the modern reader questions whether such violence could have been sanctioned he can verify fact by fiction, for no less a personage than Sir

¹ See "A Letter from Mr. Cibber to Mr. Pope," 1742, p. 65.

COFFEE HOUSE JESTS



Printed for Henry Rowe, near Bradohans in Fleet.

COMPANY AT A COFFEE HOUSE.
(From *Coffee House Jests*, *Refined and En-
larged*, 1688)



"COFFEE HOUSE BABBLE" ON THE
SACHEVERELL CASE, 1710
(From an old print)

Roger de Coverley had "kicked Bully Dawson in a public Coffee-house for calling him youngster."¹

As has already been suggested, newspapers were one of the important features of a coffee-house equipment. The last word on foreign affairs and on parliamentary matters furnished spicy food for conversation, and the habit of such conversation stimulated the appetite for news. "So fond (i.e., foolish) are men in these days," Chief Justice Scroggs had said, when trying a case as early as 1680, "that when they will deny their children a penny for bread, they will lay it out for a pamphlet; and the temptations are so great that no man can keep twopence in his pocket because of the news." In face of such conditions official opposition had been vain. The attempts of Charles II in the closing years of his reign had resulted disastrously in the discontinuance of the Licensing Act, as well as in the prompt withdrawal of an act to close the coffee-houses. Finally, in February, 1695, through the decisive failure to renew the censorship of the journals, the way was

¹ For other references in the *Spectator* see No. 24 for coffee-house autocrats; No. 87 for coffee-house idols; No. 145 for coffee-house impertinents; and No. 476 for coffee-house disputes. See also Edward Ward, *The London Spy*, 1698, 9. In Part I, a description of a coffee-house; in Part IX, of Man's Coffee-house; in Part X, of the Wits' Coffee-house; in Part XIV, of a famous coffee-house in Aldersgate-street; etc.

opened for general progress in newspaper publishing.

The increase in the number of papers was almost immediate. By 1709 eighteen separate periodicals, published in London, issued in all fifty-five numbers every week. There were six to choose from on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; twelve on Tuesdays and Thursdays; and thirteen on Saturdays. Competition between these rival sheets developed a crew of ill-paid hack writers and a species of journalism that was deeply tinged with "yellow." Their questionable methods of creating good "copy" were thrown into strong relief by the dignity and restraint of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* as Addison and Steele conducted them. So scurrilous were the personalities printed by the most unscrupulous of the tribe that harsh protests came from all sides. Of course, Swift called them "rogues" and "dogs"; the mild Queen used such terms as "seditious papers" and "designing men"; and Addison, who was not fluent in the language of vituperation, called them not only "sons of calumny" but "dirty scribblers" to boot. It was for Pope to dignify them most by damning them blackest. In the second book of the *Dunciad* he dealt with several in turn and chief with Arnall, "who

flings most filth." Of the undistinguished mob he wrote:

Next plunged a feeble but a desperate pack,
 With each a sickly brother at his back.
 Sons of a day! just buoyant on the flood,
 Then numbered with the puppies of the mud.
 Ask ye their names? I could as soon disclose
 The names of these blind puppies as of those.
 Fast by, like Niobe (her children gone),
 Sits Mother Osborne, stupefied to stone;
 And monumental brass this record bears,
 "These are, ah no! these were the gazetteers!"¹

The rewards of the successful authors have already been mentioned. For this lesser crew of hack writers the situation was usually mean and often pathetic. They were largely associated with Grub Street,² where many of them lived in penury. This pathetic little district seems never to have been distinguished for anything noble. First, because of its nearness to the Artillery Ground and Finsbury Field, it was occupied by bowyers, bowstring makers, and the like. Then the gamblers moved in. They were crowded out by seventeenth-century Puritans of the least amiable

¹ *Dunciad*, Book II, ll. 305-14.

² Grub Street, Cripplegate, was called in the fourteenth century Grobbe and in the sixteenth Grubbe Street. In 1830 it was elevated into Milton Street.

sort; and finally the "Grub Street Choir" of versewriters, critics, and pamphleteers usurped the honors of the neighborhood. They were, to be sure, an unattractive crew, sordid in their squalor and seldom inspired in what they wrote by anything better than hire or hatred. One cannot work up much enthusiasm over such a picture as this:¹

He views with keen desire
The rusty grate unconscious of a fire;
With beer and milk arrears the frieze was scored
And five crack'd tea cups dress'd the chimney board;
A night cap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night—a stocking all the day!

Yet as something had to be said about them, for they were an ever present blemish on the face of literature, those who could afford to make their reply in contempt, and those who dared, in abuse. At first, enemies of the starvelings had to be somewhat explicit:

With viler, coarser jests than at Bear Garden,
And silly Grub Street songs worse than Tom Farthing.²

Then the name without comment became a synonym for yellow journalism. "I heard a paper crying now in the street, but it sounds too much like Grub Street to send it to you."³ And finally

¹ From Goldsmith's "Description of an Author's Bedchamber."

² Shadwell, Prologue to *Bury Fair*, 1689.

³ Congreve in a letter of March 12, 1707.

the innuendo was reduced to a monosyllable, as when it was ironically said, "There might be a good *Grub* composed for his dying speech."¹ Poor defeated scrabblers after the unattainable, they are gone, and so too are the printers who helped them to spill their vitriol, and the elect who succeeded in perpetuating their fame by the vigor with which they cursed them.

For the street scenes of the town there is no better guide than John Gay's "Trivia; or, The Art of Walking the Streets of London." In three books (1715). The books are like the streets they describe in being short, crowded, and full of variety. What they omit, or barely touch upon, the *Spectator* as usual details in full. Of the high-ways themselves it appears that the single kennel or gutter was still in the middle, flooded of course in rainy weather, for there were no sewers, and in all but the driest season so wet that progress was almost a matter of navigation. The narrow ways were impeded by coaches, chairs and chairmen, and carters of all sorts. The chimney-sweep, the chandler with his basket, and the butcher with his greasy tray all threatened the wearer of fine clothes. Dangers assailed him too from "spouts high streaming" and from the dripping balconies

¹ Gilly Williams to the Earl of March, December 18, 1764.

when "Saturday's conclusive morn appears."
Furthermore

When masons mount the ladder, fragments fly,
Mortar and crumbled lime in showers descend,
And o'er thy head destructive tiles impend.

Highly characteristic of his generation is Gay's allusion to the pillory. A fearful license was granted the disorderly and malicious to pelt victims sentenced to public exposure, unpopular offenders being disfigured or even killed as a result of this extra-legal punishment.¹ To Gay, however, it occurred only to warn pedestrians to keep out of range of the missiles.

Where, elevated o'er the gaping crowd,
Clasp'd in the board, the perjur'd head is bow'd,
Betimes retreat; here, thick as hailstones pour,
Turnips and half-hatched eggs (a mingled shower)
Among the rabble rain; some random throw
May with the trickling yolk thy cheek o'erflow.

The seeker for local atmosphere could find it in local odors in all varieties, from Thames Street, the region of fish and meat markets and oil merchants, past the Fleet-Ditch, which was still a noisome open stream at the foot of Ludgate Hill,² to "the

¹ Besant, *The Orange Girl*, Part II, chap. xx.

² Pope, *Dunciad*, Book II, ll. 271-74. See also Ben Jonson, *The Famous Voyage*.

perfumed paths of fair Pall Mall." At the same time he could distinguish not only neighborhoods but times and seasons as well by the street cries: "the excessive alarms . . . in turnip season"; the call of the pickle hawkers which, "like the song of the nightingale, is not heard above two months"; the shrill note of the milkman; the hollow voice of the cooper; and the "sad and solemn air with which the public are very often asked if they have any chairs to mend."¹ One of the *Spectator's* correspondents wanted to be Comptroller-General of the London Cries. Another asked to be appointed Superintendent of Sign Posts.

\ Our streets are filled with blue boars, black swans, and red lions; not to mention flying pigs, and hogs in armour, with many other creatures more extraordinary than any in the deserts of Africa. Strange! that one who has all the birds and beasts in nature to choose out of, should live at the sign of an *Ens Rationis!* My first task, therefore, should be, like that of Hercules, to clean the city from monsters. In the second place, I would forbid, that creatures of jarring and incongruous natures should be joined together in the same sign; such as the Bell and the Neat's-tongue, the Dog and the Gridiron. The Fox and Goose may be supposed to have met, but what have the Fox and the Seven Stars to do together?

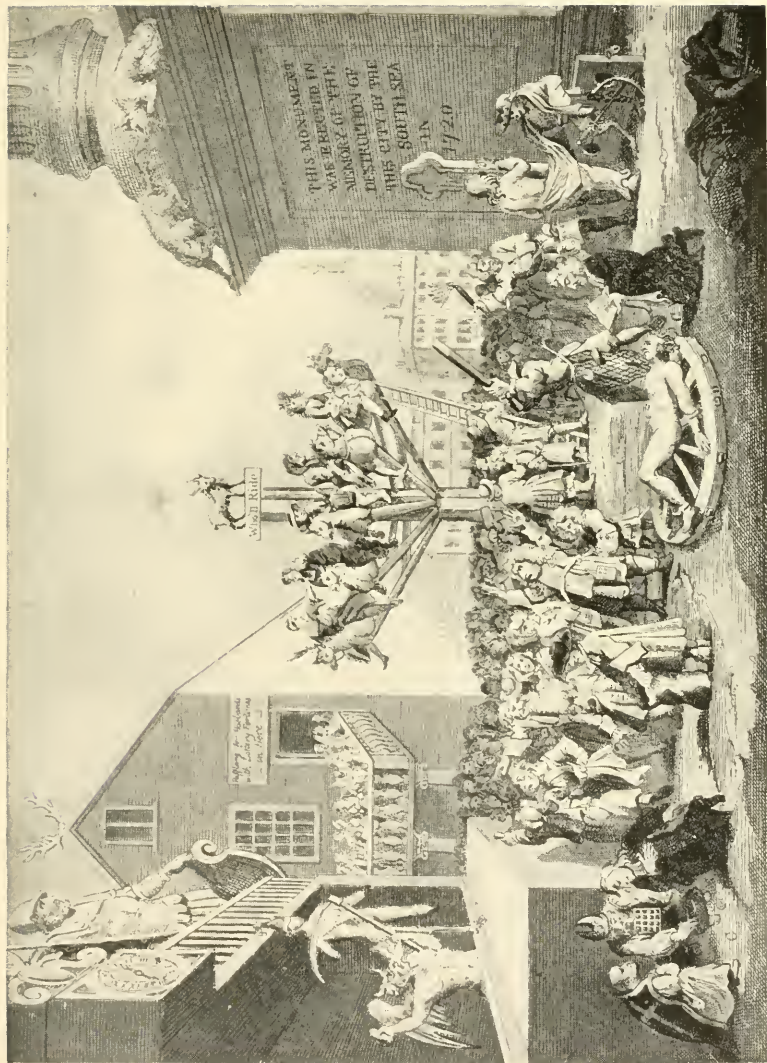
¹ *Spectator*, No. 251.

And when did the Lamb and the Dolphin ever meet except upon a sign-post? As for the Cat and Fiddle, there is a conceit in it; and, therefore, I do not intend that anything I have here said should affect it. . . .

In the third place, I would enjoin every shop to make use of a sign which bears some affinity to the wares in which he deals. What can be more inconsistent, than to see a Bawd at the sign of the Angel, or a Tailor at the Lion? A cook should not live at the boot, nor a shoemaker at the roasted pig; and yet for want of this regulation, I have seen a goat set up before the door of a perfumer, and the French king's head at a sword cutler's.¹

One of the most sensational episodes of Pope's lifetime was the blowing and pricking of the "South Sea Bubble" in 1719-20. The rapid development of foreign trade had unsettled people, as the sudden exploitation of new resources always does. An Englishman, John Law, who had escaped to France while under death sentence in 1694, had developed the "Mississippi Bubble" over there and in the course of his operations had made himself Comptroller-General of the national finances. Before his scheme had exploded in January, 1720, a plan was set afoot in England for monopolizing the South Sea trade. Led on by high dignitaries of state, all the knowing people dipped in more or less deeply. Stock jumped up

¹ *Spectator*, No. 28.



AN EMBLEMATIC PRINT ON THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE

(From an engraving by Hogarth)

from 180 in March to twice that in April and five times as much in June. Change Alley was crowded with speculators, poets, and fine ladies elbowing with the common crowd.

Subscribers here by thousands float,
And jostle one another down,
Each paddling in his leaky boat,
And here they fish for gold, and drown.¹

Pope invested for himself and for his intimates, the Blount sisters. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu plunged some of her own money and some of a French admirer, M. Rémond, paying heavily in money, reputation, and peace of mind. By early August the stock of the South Sea Company had gone up to 1,000, and a large number of other companies were luring investors into their nets. Besides some that were merely too ambitious, there were others that were the wildest of wild-cat schemes—perpetual-motion companies and projects for “extracting butter from beechnuts, silver from lead, and oil from poppies.” The South Sea directors challenged some of the other bubbles and smashed them. Then their own ruin promptly followed, and in a few weeks there was an end “to that tremendous HOAX, whose extent the petty speculators of our day look back upon with the same

¹ See Swift, *The South-Sea Project*, 1721.

expression of incredulous admiration, and hopeless ambition of rivalry, as would become the puny face of modern conspiracy contemplating the Titan size of Vaux's superhuman plot."¹ It was the end of the bubble, but not of the consequences. The South Sea directors were removed from public office, the chief ministers were discredited, and a change of government followed. Ruin was the lot of many. If the poets were easy victims, they were good losers too. Pope followed the counsel he had given his broker in advance: "Let but Fortune favour us, and the world will sure admire our prudence. If we fail, let's e'en keep the mishap to ourselves." John Gay, who had lost his whole fortune, made no pretensions to the contrary, but with a half-smile published his folly to the world:

Why did 'Change Alley waste thy precious hours
 Among the fools who gaped for golden showers?
 No wonder if we found some poets there,
 Who live on fancy, and can feed on air;
 No wonder they were caught by South Sea schemes,
 Who ne'er enjoyed a guinea but in dreams;
 No wonder that their third subscriptions sold
 For millions of imaginary gold.²

¹ See "The South Sea House" in Lamb's *Essays of Elia*.

² See Gay, "Epistles on Several Occasions," VII. To Mr. Thomas Snow, Goldsmith, near Temple Bar; A Panegyrick, occasioned by his buying and selling of the Third South-Sea Subscriptions, taken in by the Directors at a thousand per cent.

The age was arriving at a new attitude toward womankind, but only slowly. The women belonged to the establishments of which they were daughters or wives. Of the great undistinguished throng the epitaph inscribed to one was pretty much the ideal, "She was born a woman and died a house-keeper." Even Dr. Johnson toward the end of the century wrote: "Perhaps the most perfect feminine mind habitually aims at nothing higher than an exemption from blame." The decline of Charles's brilliant court removed one incentive to feminine activity. In the reign of Anne and still more in that of George I, royalty was anything but gay. Said Pope, writing to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: "Scarce any ball, assembly, basset-table, or any place where two or three are gathered together. No lone house in Wales with a rookery is more contemplative than Hampton Court." As the market for brilliant impertinence was thus withdrawn, the chief opportunity for women of fashion was to develop into vain peacocks of the type of Miss Arabella Fermor. Their main occupations were at the toilet, the card-table, the assembly, play, and opera. Always they were under the scrutinizing eye of the public, and were forced to such petty artifices to secure innocent conversation with

admirers or lovers that they were practically badgered either into complete submission or into intrigue.

Here and there striking individuals made some attempt at educating themselves beyond the ordinary. But they did it in the face of a popular prejudice, which was summed up in Lord Lyttleton's "Advice to a Lady":

Make not too dangerous wit a vain pretence
But wisely rest content with modest sense;
For wit like wine intoxicates the brain,
Too strong for feeble women to sustain.
Of those who claim it more than half have none,
And half of those who have it are undone.¹

Even when a woman did improve her mind, she was the object of such whimsical comment as was the Leonora of whose library Addison whimsically wrote: "Upon my looking into the books, I found there were some few which the lady had bought for her own use, but that most of them had been got together, either because she had heard them praised, or because she had seen the authors of them." In the former class doubtless fell "all the Classic Authors in wood. A set of Elzevirs by the same hand," together with Newton, Locke, and Jeremy Taylor; and in the latter some

¹ Lord Lyttleton, "Advice to a Lady," 1731, ll. 31-36.

writings of Sir William Temple and Richard Steele. Addison concludes by looking upon Leonora "with admiration and pity."¹

One who reads much of the literature of that generation is forced to the conclusion that it was admiration and contempt which most men felt for the ladies. Think of Swift and his Stella and his Vanessa; of Pope with his Martha and Patty Blount and his Lady Mary and his Duchess Sarah; of Steele with his cajoling letters and his consistent neglect of "Dear Prue"; of Addison and the wealthy widow whom he husbanded in splendid discontent. Think of Lady Mary herself, her dictatorial father and gracelessly autocratic suitor, of the elopement into which she was forced, the banishment to the country which she straightway suffered, and the strangely forced language of passion with which her subsequent suitors paid court to her. When a man sits down in cold blood and writes, "Pensez quelquefois à moi, et sois assurée qu'aucune femme n'a jamais été aimée autant que je vous aime,"² he must be so sure that he is lying as to feel a covert contempt for the lady to whom he blithely indites reams of

¹ See the *Spectator*, No. 37.

² See *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* by George Paston; from letter by M. Rémond to Lady Mary, p. 296.

such extravagance. The generation of men, who played with the idea of masculine inferiority in the habitual talk of noonday, never deluded themselves for a moment. There is the same relation between such discourse and rational talk that exists between a minuet and an informal cup of tea of a rainy afternoon.

When Congreve says that the morn is less glorious than Sabina's fair eyes and exclaims on the many whom her coldness will kill, he is composing the sort of stuff he knows Sabina will like.¹ Then he turns for relief to his friends to confide in them of Lesbia "heavenly fair," the first sight of whom filled him with celestial aspiration:

But soon as e'er the beauteous idiot spoke,
Forth from her coral lips such folly broke:
Like balm the trickling nonsense healed my wound
And what her eyes enthralled her tongue unbound.²

Yet a change was assuredly coming. Some few at least could appreciate the innate refinement of Steele's courtly tribute, "to have loved her was a liberal education." By a man of Captain Richard's rank such a remark could hardly have been made in Dryden's prime.

¹ See Congreve, *Poems*, ed. Samuel Johnson, "Song," p. 56.

² *Ibid.*, "Lesbia," p. 103.

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LONDON IN THE MIDDLE OF
 (Engraved from a new survey for



THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

(the *London Magazine* in 1761)

CHAPTER VI

JOHNSON'S LONDON

Between 1750 and 1800 London was rapidly becoming a big city. For four miles along the north bank of the Thames a dense community stretched back considerably beyond the farthest point of the old City limits. Southwark was almost as large in territory as the London of Chaucer's day. On the south bank, from opposite Charing Cross to beyond the Tower, the river front was lined with ugly buildings. To be sure, the green fields could be seen behind these, and the river, crossed as early as 1760 by added bridges at Blackfriars and Westminster, was still a picturesque highway for the many who preferred it to bumping over the rough cobblestones of Fleet Street and the Strand. Between 1750 and 1765 new houses are said to have gone up at the rate of over a thousand a year. Old neighborhoods retained in their narrow streets the variety of gable, and beam and plaster frontage which still survives in such buildings as Staple Inn and the Inner Temple Gate House; but the new were characterized by a severe regularity of flat-roofed

brick-and-stone along the broader thoroughfares. London was now enough of a metropolis to submerge the modestly law-abiding and to afford a dangerous refuge for the criminal.

The size of London did not, however, detract from its charm for the loyal citizen; rather he made a virtue of it. Johnson explained that it was "in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists."¹ Boswell indorsed both himself and his subject when he said: "The intellectual man is struck with it, as comprehending the whole of human life, in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhaustible."² To Burke it was "an endless addition of littleness to littleness," yet "clean, commodious, neat."² Gibbon, more candid, wrote: "Never pretend to allure me by painting in odious colours the dust of London. I love the dust."³ The great city was all things to all men, a center of learning, a well-spring of intellectual pleasures, a vast market, an assemblage of taverns, a breeder of strong men, a "heaven upon earth." Johnson, as usual, gives us the conclusion of the whole

¹ See Boswell, *Johnson*, ed. Birkbeck Hill, I, 422.

² *Ibid.*, III, 178, n. 1.

³ *Ibid.*

matter: "No, Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."¹

One of the most representative architectural monuments of the period is the Adelphi, an entire neighborhood on the edge of the Thames about halfway between Charing Cross and the Temple. This district was built up by the Adam brothers, of whom Robert and James were architects of repute, while John and William contributed to the scheme more as projectors. The buildings are characterized by a rather formal simplicity, which marked a reaction against the comparative ornateness of Inigo Jones and even of Christopher Wren. To such a critic as Horace Walpole, who was loyal to the romantic traditions of the past, the formalism of these Scotch architects was highly unwelcome: "What are the Adelphi buildings? Warehouses, laced down the seams like a soldier's frill in a regimental old coat."² The canny foresight of this quartet of Scotchmen in redeeming a bit of the river front did not in its day meet with any appreciation. There was enormous room for improvement, as later generations have seen.

¹ See Boswell, *Johnson*, ed. Birkbeck Hill, III, 178.

² See Walpole, *Letters*, Walpole to Mason, July 29, 1773.

The banks of the Thames are occupied by tanners, dyers, and other manufacturers, who there have an opportunity of easily supplying themselves with water. The streets where these manufactures are carried on are the dirtiest in the city; the bridges have no prospect of the river except through a balustrade of stone, with a rail of modillions three feet high. . . . In a word, in the first excursion which I made, in order to get a survey of London, I could not have a full view of the Thames, either on the side of the City or on that of Southwark, unless I entered the houses and manufactories which stand close to the river. The reason which some assign for this is the natural bent of the English, and in particular the people of London, towards suicide.¹

But for London to receive even an improvement at the hands of men who came from the north of the Tweed was an unpleasant experience.

Four Scotchmen, by the name of Adams,
Who keep their coaches and their madams,
Quoth John, in sulky mood, to Thomas,
Have stole the very river from us!

Ye friends of George, and friends of James,
Envy us not our river Thames;
The princess, fond of raw-boned faces,
May give you all our posts and places;
Take all to gratify your pride,
But dip your oatmeal in the Clyde.²

¹ See George Paston, *Sidelights of the Georgian Period*, pp. 176-77. Translated from M. Pierre Grosley's *London*, 1790.

² See *Foundling Hospital for Wit*, ed. 1784, IV, 189.



THE ADELPHI TERRACE

Garrick's home and death-place was the right-hand half of the central section



STAPLE INN, HOLBORN. JOHNSON'S HOME IN 1759

Two famous buildings which Time has spared

(From photographs)

At the present time so far have further encroachments on the river been carried on that these buildings stand well back of a little park, which itself is separated from the river by the Victoria Embankment, for here and beyond, upon the northern side for a stretch of some four miles, London has at last at enormous expense recognized the error of its ways in a fitting treatment of the river front. Of the famous inhabitants of the Adelphi in Johnson's period, the one most interesting from a literary point of view was David Garrick, who occupied a house in the very center of the "Terrace" which flanked the river above the arches.

It is more or less of a literary fashion to condemn the mid-eighteenth century as a superficial, worldly wise, and altogether oversophisticated generation. The natural steps to such a conclusion lead from Pope and Addison, via Handel, to Chesterfield the diplomat, and Walpole the dilettante. Yet, though there is some measure of justification for such a verdict, it is quite worth while to note that among all the men who exerted a wide influence, none are more generally familiar today than two homely and unconventional commoners—William Hogarth, "that little man

in the sky-blue coat," and Samuel Johnson, "the respectable Hottentot."¹ Whatever may be the chromatic tint which would best recall the color of eighteenth-century London, it must be largely determined by the primary hues which represent the classes for which Lord Chesterfield and Horace Walpole stood, and the masses out of which Johnson and Hogarth emerged. For the eternal conflict was still on, taking form now not in such revolutions as marked Dryden's lifetime, but in a slow, organic development which conferred a fresh status and a new dignity on the middle and lower classes.

About the point of view of the writers, the nature of the bulk of their material, and the character of the reading public in the first half of the century, enough perhaps has been said in a previous chapter. A striking index as to the degree of democratic sympathy felt by the leaders of this generation is contained in a chance observation in one of Lord Cobham's letters to Pope:

I congratulate you upon the fine weather. 'Tis a strange thing that people of condition and men of parts must enjoy it in common with the rest of the world.

¹ Even though Mr. Birkbeck Hill was correct in his argument that Lord Chesterfield did not intend his famous description for Dr. Johnson, all the evidence shows that by chance, if not design, it was strikingly faithful. See Chesterfield, *Letters to His Son*, February 28 (O.S.), 1751.

But a great change had taken place by the end of the next half-century. The novel which was the narrative form in vogue illustrates this by the type of character which it chiefly emphasizes. Richardson, stumbling upon success, made his first heroine out of a lady's maid. Fielding, starting to burlesque Amelia, presented as his central figure her brother, Joseph Andrews. Tom Jones, Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle, and Humphrey Clinker were all men of low estate. Goldsmith in a modernized version of the Book of Job chose as his hero a vicar in Wakefield, who had nothing to commend him except his heroism, and gave vent in describing the deserted village of "sweet Auburn" to a fierce invective against the mistaken ways of a selfish aristocracy.¹ Goldsmith moved in a group which was dominated by the son of an up-country shopkeeper, but which included in its truly democratic roll Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Topham Beauclerk, and Bennet Langton on the same footing with himself, the actor Garrick, and the Scotch squire James Boswell.

There was no complete change, of course, during these fifty years; but the evident shift in the keynote of the literature suggests what was going

¹ For a poetical account of these developments in literature see Part IV of *Wordsworth's Grave*, by William Watson.

on among the people. As it was so strikingly a period in which a new social equation was being worked out, the best way of coming to a solution of it is to establish as nearly as possible the value of some of the chief factors, and thus to arrive at an understanding of the new product—the London of 1775. First, then, for the worldly wisdom of the gentlemen who are usually held up as the leading exponents of the century. These are the men who furnished the material for such an admirable generalization as the following:

[The early eighteenth century] was conventional through and through; and its men felt secure from the ills of time only when sheltered under some ingenious artificial construction of rule and precedent. . . . The familiar bustle of the drawing-room and coffee-house and play-house; or the more exalted life of Parliament and Court, the intrigues of State-chambers, the maneuvers of the battle-field; the aspects of human activity wherever collective man in his social capacity goes through the orderly and comprehensible changes of his ceaseless pursuit of worldly happiness and worldly success; these were the subjects that for the men of the eighteenth century had absorbing charm, . . . and to these . . . they instinctively limited themselves.¹

One of the most famous of these was Philip Dormer, fourth Earl of Chesterfield (1694–1773).

¹ Introduction to *Selections from Newman*. Edited by L. E. Gates.

He was born to wealth and position, and educated to use them both to the utmost personal advantage. He enjoyed, particularly in his early years, a degree of tact which was always capable of keeping in check any honest but unpopular convictions that he might entertain, and a character which he described to his son by way of cataloguing the essentials for statesmanship:

An absolute command of your temper . . . ; Address enough to refuse without offending; or, by your manner of granting to double the obligation; Dexterity enough to conceal the truth without telling a lie; Sagacity enough to read other people's countenances; and Serenity enough not to let them discover anything by yours—a seeming frankness with a real reserve. These are the rudiments of a Politician; the world must be your grammar.¹

He concealed his contempt for the frivolities of fashionable life because it was easier to conform than refrain. To avoid scandal he observed his own moral code:

A real man of fashion and pleasure observes decency; at least neither borrows nor affects vices; and, if he unfortunately has any, he gratifies them with choice, delicacy, and secrecy.²

Always he was studying the privileged people with whom he dealt, wary to ascertain their

¹ Chesterfield, *Letters to His Son*, January 15 (O.S.), 1748.

² *Ibid.*, March 27 (O.S.), 1747.

weaknesses and discover how to employ their friendship or foil their enmity. Yet, withal, he felt a real respect for the aristocracy of intellect as well as of birth, and testified to it handsomely when he wrote:

For my own part I used to think myself in company as much above me, when I was with Mr. Addison and Mr. Pope, as if I had been with all the Princes in Europe.¹

Horace Walpole, fourth Earl of Orford, and accomplished foe to Chesterfield, was a nobleman of the same type. After securing a genteel education, and holding several offices in the gift of his father, the greatest statesman of the day, he took up his residence at Strawberry Hill (ten miles up the river from the City), and made his estate as famous as himself by his amiable activities there. He cultivated his gardens till they "sprouted away like any chaste nymph in the metamorphoses." He built himself a little Gothic castle, so filling it with works of art that he found it worth while to publish a description of his home and its contents. He set up his own press, printing *A Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England*, and twenty-odd other things chosen from the same aristocratic point of view. Meanwhile he cultivated many friendships

¹ Chesterfield, *Letters to His Son*, October 9 (O.S.), 1747.

and left behind him hundreds of letters which, in conjunction with Chesterfield's, give a fairly complete index to the temper and character of the social group.

\ He wrote, for instance, about the enterprises of one Macall,¹ a canny Scotchman who played adroitly and profitably on the gambling propensities of the men and the social ambitions of their wives and daughters. From the period of the Restoration until the passage of the Gaming Acts of 1845 high play was eminently respectable and widely popular. Public lotteries flourished from a far earlier date, the government securing enormous sums for all sorts of good works. Perhaps the most properly sponsored undertaking was that of which the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, and the Speaker of the House of Commons acted as managers and trustees when in 1753 £100,000 was raised for the British Museum Purchase Fund. The proceedings at Almack's must have been rather less decorous, but much more exciting.

\ This club was founded in 1764, when at White's—which for years had been the exclusive club—gambling was languishing in a losing competition with political intrigue. The members

¹ This name transposed becomes Almack's—the name of the club and the assembly room he conducted.

were young gentlemen of fashion, Charles James Fox setting the pace for them all in gambling as well as in statesmanship. On a certain day in February, 1771, he delivered a speech in Parliament on a religious question after having prepared himself, as Gibbon put it, "by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard." During that protracted game he lost at the rate of £500 per hour. On the next day he recovered £6,000, but later in the week he and his brother between them dropped £21,000 in two sittings. Lord Stavordale, not yet of age, regained £11,000 in a single play, and then commented on what he might have made if he "had been playing deep." When Almack's became Brooks's Club (St. James Street), the same membership continued. Fox, Pitt, Burke, Reynolds, and Walpole were magnets strong enough to draw in such sober gentlemen as Hume the philosopher and Gibbon the historian. They doubtless were welcome; but the goddess of chance was far more popular at Brooks's than any of the Muses except perhaps Terpsichore.

It was at Brooks's Club that one homely invention was made which has been of practical benefit to posterity. The Earl of Sandwich was one of the high players who sometimes sat for hours without interruption at the table. On one

of these occasions, unwilling to leave play, but faint from lack of food, he called for a bit of beef between two slices of bread, and by this odd accident not only appeased his hunger but gave his name to an invention which has been popular ever since.

\ Play was not limited to the men, for organized games under polite disguise were carried on in the drawing-room of many a grand lady. Scandal over Lady Buckinghamshire's bank, newspaper publicity, and the threat of an eminent judge to expose any convicted offenders in the pillory "though they should be the first ladies in the land," put an end to flagrant offenses under such auspices. In the meanwhile the ladies had another diversion which they owed originally to Macall. For a hundred years, from 1765 on, but especially for the first quarter-century, the balls at Almack's assembly rooms (King Street, St. James) were the most desirably exclusive of social events, the little group of two hundred elect being organized from a nucleus of fourteen ladies, the inmost of the inner circles.

All on that magic List depends;
Fame, fortune, fashion, lovers, friends:
'Tis that which gratifies or vexes
All ranks, all ages, and both sexes.

If once to Almack's you belong,
 Like monarchs you can do no wrong;
 But banished thence on Wednesday night,
 By Jove, you can do nothing right.¹

It was in this company that the Macaronis² of the day enjoyed their most distinguished opportunity to flourish. They were in their prime only from 1760 to 1770, and hence are not to be judged alone from the abusive satire directed at them in the early seventies, when they were in their decline. From those comments it would appear that these fine gentlemen were brainless, effeminate, utterly eccentric, and hardly capable of any feeling more ardent than the passion for dress. In evidence, such a passage as this from *The Macaroni Magazine*, which compassed its career between 1770 and 1773:

Hats are rising behind and falling before. The blazing gold loop and full-moon button are now totally exploded, and succeeded by a single narrow looping, broad hat-band, and pin's-head button. . . . The late stunting of coats having promoted the growth of skirts, the pockets

¹ Luttrell, *Julia*, letter I.

² See the *Spectator*, No. 47. Addison, writing in 1711, refers to those "wits whom every nation calls by the name of that dish of meat which it loves best: in Holland they are termed Pickled Herrings; in France, Jean Pottages; in Italy, Maccaronies; and in Great Britain, Jack Puddings." Fifty years later England had adopted the Italian name.

are capable of holding conveniently a tolerable sized muslin handkerchief and smelling-bottle.

Yet the facts show that Almack's was the "Macaroni Club," that their leader was Charles James Fox, that they were great travelers, and such men of wit that they included among them an intimate of Dr. Johnson in the person of Topham Beauclerk. In dress they were doubtless as picturesque as tradition makes them, but in character they were more interesting than they are sometimes credited with being. Thus when Yankee Doodle

Stuck a feather in his cap,
And called it Macaroni,

he must have been in a mood of rather rare complacency.

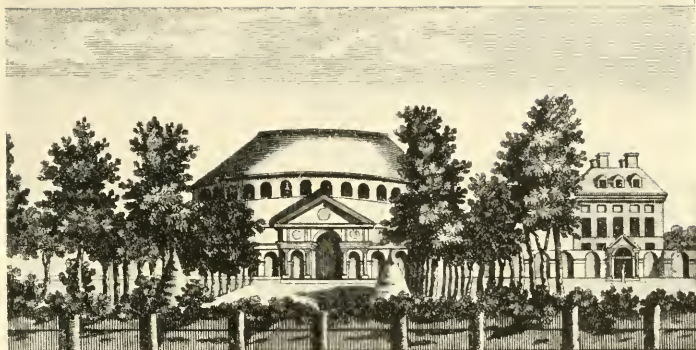
\ For such gentlemen, and such ladies as were their friends and companions, special and polite diversions were necessary in the summer months—diversions which were nowhere better supplied than at Vauxhall and Ranelagh. Vauxhall Gardens were on the Surrey side of the Thames in South Lambeth, the better part of a mile up river beyond Westminster Abbey. The usual approach was by water, for the hire of "a pair of oars" was very slight and the trip a pleasant one. It was only a few steps from Vauxhall Stairs

to the simple entrance behind which the enchantments were to be discovered. The Gardens were laid out as early as 1661 and until the death of Queen Anne were the gorgeous scene of roystering carryings-on. Even Pepys was troubled "to see the confidence of the vice of the age." With the reopening under a new manager in 1732 the place became splendidly gay, full of noise, mirth, and vulgarity, but almost always within sight of at least the horizon line of decorum. High life resorted thither to enjoy itself and be seen, and low life to gape at what it could see or even to indulge in the giddy experience of social stilt-walking.

[So] each spruce Nymph from city counters free
Sips the frothed syllabub or fragrant tea;
While with sliced ham, scraped beef, and burnt
champagne
Her 'prentice lover soothes his amorous pain.¹

The term garden seems not to have been the misnomer which it is for many a so-called summer garden today. There were about eleven acres inside the inclosure, a considerable grove, and a Dark Walk completely shaded by overarching trees. The general equipment of the gardens was suggestive of much that one can find today in like

¹ See Canning, "Loves of the Triangles."



View of RANELAUGH GARDENS near Chelsea .



View of VAUX-HALL GARDENS .

TWO FAMOUS EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GARDENS

(From an old print)

resorts. There was a pavilion for a kind of open-air musical vaudeville. There was a rotunda for use in showery weather. There were temples, colonnades, and triumphal arches; a great deal of allegorical painting on all hands, imposing statuary, brilliant lighting devices—at least for those days; imitation ruins, and a waterworks wickedly nicknamed the “Tin Cascade”; and finally innumerable tables for the serving of expensive food.

Horace Walpole gives the circumstantial details of one evening's gayety.¹ He tells how the party of seven came up river in their barge with a “boat of French horns attending,” and took their places in a conspicuous booth, or box. Of how as one detail in their supper they minced seven chickens, consuming also “hampers of strawberries and cherries”; and of how they enjoyed themselves so thoroughly that from eleven o'clock to half-past one they were surrounded by curious bystanders. Miss Burney's heroines Evelina and Cecilia both visit Vauxhall² and behave themselves more discreetly than Miss Sparre and “the Pollard” Ashe who frisked with Horace Walpole.

¹ See Walpole, *Letters*—to George Montagu, June 23, 1750. Ed. Cunningham, II, 210 ff.

² See *Evelina*, letter XLVI; and *Cecilia*, chap. vi.

It was here, too, that the Chinese philosopher, the Man in Black, Beau Tibbs, Mrs. Tibbs, and the Pawnbroker's widow¹ spent their memorable evening. The Philosopher, more frank than the others,

found every sense overpaid with more than expected pleasure; the lights everywhere glimmering through the scarcely moving trees, the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of the night, the natural concert of the birds in the more retired part of the grove . . . ; the company gaily dressed looking satisfaction, and the tables spread with various delicacies all . . . lifted me into an ecstasy of admiration. . . . "Head of Confucius," cried I to my friend, "this is fine! This unites rural beauty with courtly magnificence!"

But the rest of the company knew better than to give themselves away by any such naïveté. The widow for a while ventured to enjoy herself until finally she

was fairly conquered in point of politeness. . . . It is true that she would now and then forget herself and confess that she was pleased, but they soon brought her back again to miserable refinement. She once praised the painting of the box in which we were sitting, but was convinced that such paltry pieces ought rather to excite horror than satisfaction; she ventured again to commend one of the singers, but Mrs. Tibbs soon let her know, in the style of a connoisseur, that the singer in question had neither ear, voice, nor judgment.

¹ Goldsmith, *Citizen of the World*, letter LXXI.

Vauxhall was not enough. Ten years after the reopening, in 1742, Ranelagh was established down at Chelsea. This was a kind of "Vauxhall under cover," the chief feature of which was a circular walk surrounded with refreshment booths beneath the great rotunda, one hundred and fifty feet across. As with the older resort, people liked it or hated it according to their tempers. Smollett's Matthew Bramble could not contain his impatience:

What are the amusements of Ranelagh? One-half the company are following one another's tails, like so many blind asses in an olive mill, where they can neither discourse, distinguish, or be distinguished; while the other half are drinking hot water under the denomination of tea.¹

But whether for better or for worse the fickle fit of fashion decreed Ranelagh to be the proper thing, as the newest thing is likely to be, so that two years after it was opened Horace Walpole wrote that he went every night; for it had totally beaten Vauxhall. "Nobody goes anywhere else—everybody goes there." All about the outskirts of the city were other spas, wells, and gardens, but all were, in however slight a degree, fashioned

¹ See Smollett, *Humphrey Clinker*, letter of M. Bramble to Dr. Lewis, London, May 22; also *ibid.*, Lydia Melford to Letitia Willis, London, May 31.

after the style of these two, and none could take the wall of them.

These were the places frequented by Londoners who merely wished to enjoy themselves without regard to social advancement. Mention has been made of the bigness of the city as compared with former generations. Yet it should be remembered that as cities of the twentieth century go London before 1800 was hardly more than a big town. Except for the strip four miles long and a half-mile wide, the rest of what is modern London was suburban or genuine open country. A breath of fresh air was thus within easy reach of shopkeepers, apprentices, and artisans, who worked in the same streets which are now many miles from any visible blade of grass which is not inclosed in a public square or park. For these people the delights of *al fresco* entertainment were perennial. They went to Marylebone Gardens, for instance, to enjoy the music, the fireworks, and the simple refreshments. They were present in considerable numbers on the evening when Dr. Johnson protested because the fireworks were postponed.

This [said the Doctor] is a mere excuse to save their crackers for a more profitable company; let us both hold up our sticks and threaten to break those coloured lamps,

and we shall soon have our wishes gratified. The core of the fireworks cannot be injured; let the different pieces be touched in their respective centres and they will do their offices as well as ever.¹

And they joined him in smashing the lamps and in discovering the uncharitableness of their theory when the fireworks justified Mr. Torre by refusing to soar heavenward.

Most of these lesser gardens made up by the prestige of their mineral springs what they lacked in elaborateness of architecture and decoration. Islington Spa was one of the most famous of these. It was established in 1685, made freshly popular in 1733 when two of the princesses attended regularly, and it was patronized by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; but in general it existed for the people of small means, for whom it had, among other advantages, that of being within reasonable walking-distance. More popular than either was Bagnigge Wells, established on an old country residence of Nell Gwynne, with a fine, big pumphoom, a formal garden, ponds, and fountains, and three rustic bridges crossing the Fleet River, which flowed through the grounds. This was the great parade ground for the third estate.

¹ See Boswell, *Johnson*, ed. Birkbeck Hill, IV, 324.

Thy arbour Bagnigge, and the gay alcove
Where the frail nymphs in amorous dalliance rove,
Where 'prentice youths enjoy the Sunday feast,
And city madams boast their Sabbath best,
Where unfledged Templars first as fops parade,
And new made ensigns sport their first cockade.

The theater of Johnson's day supplies the modern student with a long succession of picturesque episodes. The continued patronage of royalty except for an interval between Charles II and Queen Anne had insured the attendance of fashionable society. In certain respects the theater maintained surprisingly the traditions of one and even two centuries earlier. The two licensed establishments were under royal grant and nominally under royal control. The audience was distributed in pit and boxes much as it had been two hundred years before. The most pretentious playgoers still took places on the stage, and were still sources of distraction to people who really wanted to follow the play.

As time went on the voice of the people was more and more emphatic and more and more deferred to; and this was expressed not merely by way of applause and vocal disapproval but by the sort of violence that was characteristic of the age. The pit seems to have regarded the demolition

of the harpsichord as a rather conventional expression of disapproval, though the beginning of hostilities was usually preceded with a request that ladies leave the theater. The earlier indifference and even contempt of actors and dramatists for the occupants of the cheap places was completely changed by the days of Goldsmith and Sheridan. In 1755 David Garrick, exhausted by the strain of appearing every night, attempted to substitute from time to time a very expensive pantomime, *The Chinese Festival*. The Drury Lane audience expressed their disapproval emphatically on the first night, but on a repetition of the performance, in spite of the King's support, the pit overwhelmed the gentlemen in the boxes, smashed the harpsichord, clambered on to the stage, demolished the scenery, and finished the job by breaking all the windows in Mr. Garrick's house.

Yet the public were loyal and enthusiastic in the support of their greatest favorites, when these great favorites did as the public wanted. Garrick among men was supreme in comedy and tragedy, and for years was absolute master of his audiences as the first great actor who swept away the stilted conventions of the past and really held the mirror up to nature. Dr. Johnson on

account of his defective seeing and hearing did not patronize the theater as he otherwise would have. He was inclined somewhat to discount the genius of his old friend David except when somebody else criticized him, when he became his sturdy champion. He was interested in Mrs. Siddons, who did herself the honor to call upon him the year before his death, and he promised that he would "once more hobble out to the theatre" whenever she should act the part of Catherine in *Henry VIII*. That was an enormously impressive evening at Drury Lane Theater in 1776, when David Garrick said farewell to the stage. "I remember," says one spectator, "that more tears were shed when he had finished this touching part and the curtain dropped than he had ever excited, perhaps, mighty as his control might be over the passions of his audience when acting a character in the most affecting tragedy."

Club life of the sort instituted in the lifetimes of Addison and Pope by no means declined as the century went on. After the informal beginnings in coffee-houses and taverns, and the organization of White's and Almack's, these were followed as early as 1800 by nearly a dozen others. The earlier clubs depended little upon elaborateness of surroundings, and therefore were able to main-

tain themselves on small memberships and negligible fees. The one great essential was the "clubableness"¹ of its members.

The coffee-house of this period which inherited the prestige of Will's and Button's was the Bedford, also of Covent Garden—a place frequented by Fielding, Churchill, Hogarth, Goldsmith, and Dr. Arne, the musician. As an organization the Sublime Society of Beefsteaks was one of the finest in its democratic conviviality. It was founded in 1735 and included a score of distinguished men who met weekly at the Covent Garden Theatre for their beefsteak dinner. At the end of their room through a grating in the form of a gridiron the fire could be seen, and over it the inscription:

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly.

Here Hogarth and Churchill again, Garrick, Mr. Wilkes, Lord Sandwich, and the Prince of Wales ate, drank, and talked together with the rest of the twenty members. The chairman of the evening was a target for the witticisms of the others. The last man elected, regardless of his

¹ See Boswell, *Johnson*, ed. Birkbeck Hill, IV, 254, n. 2: "'Boswell,' said he 'is very a clubable man.'"

social status, acted as butler and brought the wine from the cellar.

\ Greatest of all was Johnson's special group, the Literary Club, enormously exclusive in its way, yet sublimely regardless of rank or wealth in its membership. Macaulay wrote of that famous society:

The room is before us, and the table on which stand the omelet for Nugent and the lemons for Johnson; there are assembled those heads which live forever in the canvas of Reynolds. There are the spectacles of Burke and the tall, thin form of Langton, the courtly sneer of Beauclerk, and the beaming smile of Garrick, Gibbon tapping his snuff-box, and Sir Joshua with his trumpet in his ear. In the foreground is that strange figure which is as familiar to us as the figures amongst which we have been brought up, the gigantic body, the huge massy face seamed with the scars of disease, the brown coat and the black-worsted stockings, the grey wig with the scorched foretop, the dirty hands, the nails bitten and pared to the quick. We see the eyes and the nose moving with convulsive twitches, we see the huge form rolling, we hear it puffing, and then comes the "No, sir," and "You don't see your way through the question, sir."¹

The London of Johnson's day suffered even by comparison with the present in the "choice, delicacy, and secrecy" with which it indulged

¹ See conclusion of Macaulay's "Essay on Samuel Johnson," *Edinburgh Review*, September, 1831.

itself. Of the court roysterers, enough has already been said in an earlier chapter, but they taught vicious lessons which the mob was not slow to follow. Throughout the century they were a terrible, uncontrolled power. Benjamin Franklin wrote in 1768:

Even this capital is now a daily scene of lawless riot. Mobs patrolling the streets at noonday, some knocking all down that will not roar for Wilkes and liberty; courts of justice afraid to give judgment against him; coal heavers and porters pulling down the houses of coal merchants that refuse to give them more wages; sawyers destroying saw-mills; sailors unrigging all the outward-bound ships, and suffering none to sail till merchants agree to raise their pay; watermen destroying private boats and threatening bridges, soldiers firing among the mobs and killing men, women, and children. . . . While I am writing a great mob of coal porters fill the street, carrying a wretch of their business upon poles to be ducked for working at the old wages.¹

Much of this violence, as Franklin saw it, had to do with political or industrial conditions, and was no more disorderly and by no means as extraordinary as the suffrage demonstrations of today. But the smashing instinct often flourished in sheer wantonness. If a sailor or wharf hand was offended in a public house, he could easily gather

¹ *Benjamin Franklin's Memoirs*, III, 315, 316.

assistants and wreck it from top to bottom before troops appeared. If, by chance, he were arrested for inciting to riot, he could hope to be rescued before, during, or after trial. He might even be cut down and spirited back to life after dangling a few minutes at the rope's end. He might wreck a theater if advertised performers defaulted, or a factory if he disliked the way it was run. He might, and he did, do all these things. And more still, for he conspired to rob the very Queen in the City streets, marched, thousands strong, to serve notice on a King who was neglectful of his duties, and held Parliament in siege and destroyed most of the prisons in town when led to a frenzy of violence under a nobly born fanatic. Hume, addressing the King in 1775, had asked how the Crown could expect to control colonies at 3,000 miles' distance when it could not secure the respect of English subjects. By 1780 this question had acquired an awful pertinence, for the Gordon riots¹ of that year were almost as overwhelming in their seven days' course, as the Great Fire of 1666. Starting as an anti-Catholic demonstration, they developed into a prolonged and indiscriminate frenzy. On the fifth day the terrorists stormed and fired Newgate Prison. On the sixth day—

¹ See Dickens, *Barnaby Rudge*, chaps. xlviii-lxviii.

I walked with Dr. Scott, to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Protestants were plundering the Sessions-house at the Old-Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed, in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. On Wednesday they broke open the Fleet and the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea, and Wood Street Compter, and Clerkenwell Bridwell, and released all the prisoners. At night they set fire to the Fleet, and the King's Bench, and I know not how many other places; and one might see the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts. The sight was dreadful.¹

Even the reaction to be expected after such an outburst did not lead to complete reform. The English election then and far into the nineteenth century seems almost to have imposed an obligation to cut loose. In 1782 a German traveler witnessed the boisterous conclusion to "that most English of sights," the Westminster election in Covent Garden:

When the whole was over, the rampant spirit of liberty and the wild impatience of a genuine English mob were exhibited in perfection. In a very few minutes the whole scaffolding, benches, and chairs, and everything else, was completely destroyed; and the mat with which it had

¹ Boswell, *Johnson*, ed. Birkbeck Hill, III, 429.

been covered torn into ten thousand long strips or pieces or strings; with which they encircled or enclosed multitudes of people of all ranks. These they hurried along with them, and everything else that came in their way, as trophies of joy; and thus in the midst of exultation and triumph, they paraded through many of the most populous streets of London.²

If the disorder of the crowd was stimulated by the "rampant spirit of liberty," the activities of the criminal were encouraged by the futility of the police and the clumsy inefficiency of legal procedure. The "strong arm of the law" was no figure of speech to apply to the eighteenth-century London constabulary. Its members were physically unfit and its organization so loose that a bold malefactor could evade arrest with great ease. When culprits were actually brought to court, the excessive penalties prescribed for petty offenses made prosecutors, witnesses, and magistrates at some times slow to act, and at others led to warped judgment and summary procedure. If finally the prison doors closed upon a man, he found himself in a center of every kind of filth, in a stronghold which was disgraced by systems of fees and garnishings at once degrading to those who had money to pay them and horrid imposi-

² Quoted in *Eighteenth Century Vignettes*, 1st ser., by Austin Dobson, pp. 222-23.

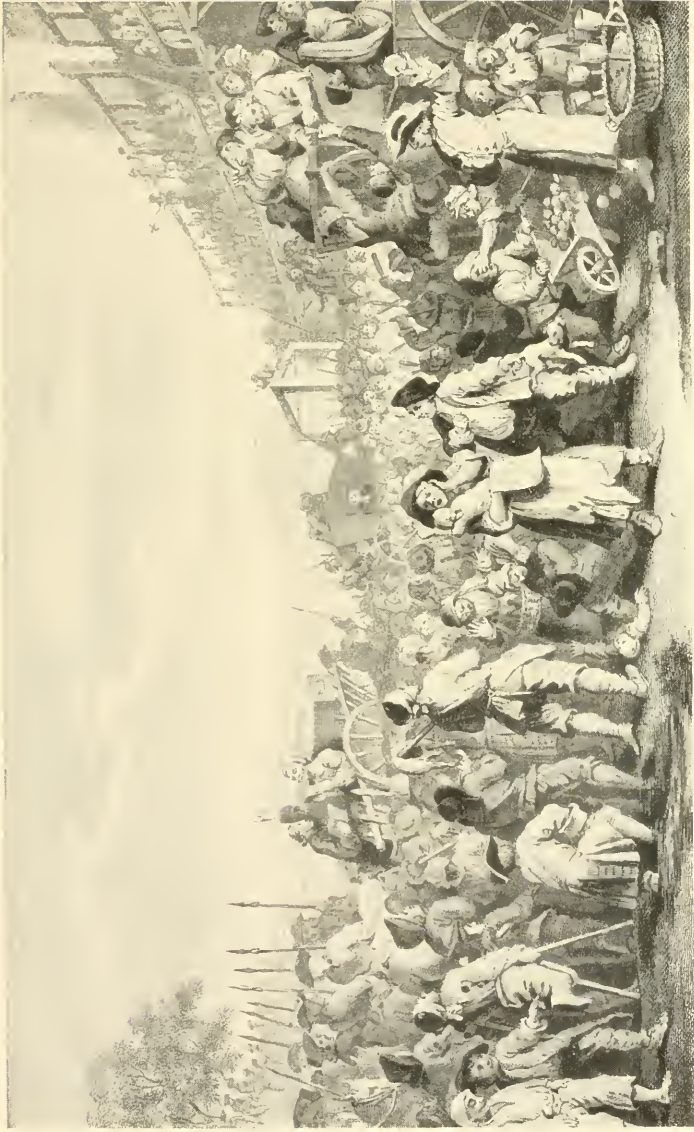
tions on the really poverty-stricken. The still surviving savagery of the day displayed itself most rampantly in the pelting of victims in the pillory and the pursuit of prisoners in the grim progress from Newgate up Holborn and what is now Oxford Street to the northeast corner of Hyde Park, where they were publicly executed on Tyburn gallows.

It was this side of London that "the little man in the sky-blue coat" has put in the graphic record of his engravings and paintings. Hogarth was born at Bartholomew's Close, Smithfield, in 1697. His father, a schoolmaster, bequeathed him an intellect and London gave him an opportunity. He was apprenticed to a silver-plate engraver, for whom he designed conventional patterns until the monotony drove him almost mad. Then, in his own way, he began original pictorial work, first for booksellers and afterward for himself, in the satirical series which made him permanently famous.¹ Conventional designs might be well enough for some, but unconventional criticism was more to his taste. He was a very positive character, giving and receiving the

¹ The best known of these were as follows: "The Harlot's Progress," six plates; "The Rake's Progress," eight; "The Election," four; "Marriage-a-la-Mode," six; "Industry and Idleness," twelve; "The Four Times of Day," four.

most positive impressions. Those who disliked him were willing to applaud the critic who called him "a strutting, consequential little man." Others who admired him were better satisfied to describe him as "a dauntless, self-sufficing, uncompromising spirit." Like Walpole and Chesterfield, he was absorbed in watching man's "ceaseless pursuit of worldly happiness and worldly success," but with a difference. For in Hogarth's eyes the pursuit was usually a vain one, and the worldly happiness and success were purchased at an awful cost to the welfare of the community.

Hogarth's view was no more complete than any other satirist's, but it is no wonder in discussing the things he had in mind that he should not have produced as suavely agreeable an impression as Addison. The mere difference in subject-matter is sufficient to account for the difference in effect. Democratic life, with all the intensity of the problems which arise from excess and from poverty, is bound to supply material for a more sober form of art than is the decorous misbehavior of the well to do. Hogarth served as a complement to Reynolds and Gainsborough, just as in an earlier day Jonathan Swift did for Addison.



"THE IDLE PRENTICE EXECUTED AT TYBURN"
(From an engraving by Hogarth)

Yet the closer one studies these panoramic plates of Hogarth, the more clear and complete is the picture of Hogarth's London which is in the background of almost every one of them. The moral of the series aside, see how illuminating are the twelve scenes of "Industry and Idleness." Here is the 'prentice system before our eyes, the two younger weavers each playing his title-rôle at the cumbrous looms and each unconscious of his master's eye. Here is a church interior with the service in progress, and here at the same moment in the churchyard a group gambling at the tomb's edge. Here is a street scene at the sign of "West and Goodchild" (four doors from the Fire Monument); and the industrious 'prentice, now partner and son-in-law to boot, feeing the wedding musicians. Here is a banquet scene within the hall of his company, the livery-men devouring of his bounty, and Goodchild, Sheriff of London, pompously dispensing it. Here are a court scene, an execution at Tyburn, and finally a Lord Mayor's procession. Here are a Grub Street attic, a winter glimpse of Covent Garden, the Salisbury Coach overturned at Charing Cross, a cock-pit scene, the Southwark Fair, an emblematical print of the Lottery. All of these, moreover, and all the rest are crowded

with the detail that repays study—study even of the pious moralizations of Dr. Trusler.¹

Samuel Johnson rarely assumed this Hogarthian attitude, although he knew London from bottom to top. To be sure, the first document one would naturally turn to, his poem on "London," appears to be full of bitter irony. But as a matter of fact this was an imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal, and even at that was written only a year or so after his arrival in town, when he had been more or less overwhelmed with the grim discovery that

Slow rises worth by poverty depressed.

Under the circumstances it is not surprising that he should have inveighed at

the needy villain's general home
The common sewer of Paris and of Rome,

or indulged in such an ill-assorted couplet as

Here falling houses thunder on your head
And here a female atheist strikes you dead;

for in 1738 there were certain evidences of decay both in domestic architecture and in religion. A

¹ *Hogarth Moralized, a Complete Edition . . . Accompanied with Concise and Comprehensive Explanations of Their Moral Tendency*, by Reverend Doctor Trusler.

man who has felt the terrors, either in experience or prospect, of

Toil, envy, want, the patron and the jail,

is not likely to be over-charitable in his comments; but as fortune became kindlier Johnson developed into as fulsome a flatterer of London as any mistress could have wished.

There is hardly any other passage in his writings in which he comments so at length upon his city. As a rule he was inclined to see London concretely and to discuss it in terms of very definite events or problems or people. Intimate as he was with those phases of the city which inspired Hogarth, to his most effective work, his knowledge seldom moved him to any mood of social protest. There seem to have been two reasons for this. Temperamentally he inclined toward a certain resignation. He might have said of the social scheme what he did say in behalf of the individual:

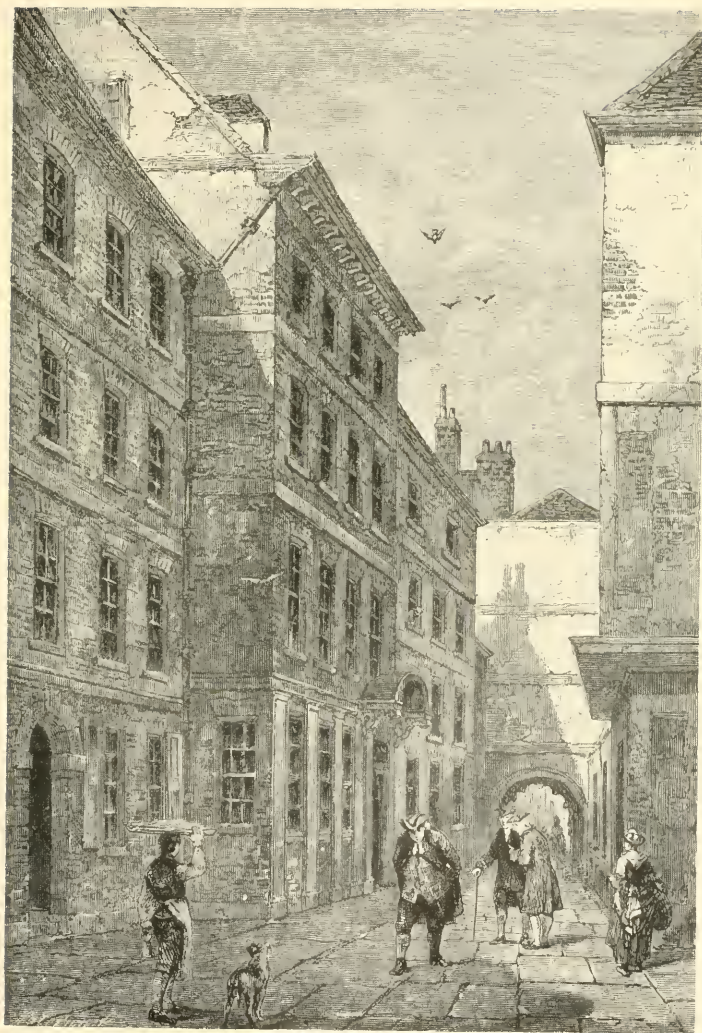
The great remedy which Heaven has put in our hands is patience, by which, though we cannot lessen the torments of the body, we can in a great measure preserve the peace of the mind.

\ Complementary to this characteristic hue of mind, or perhaps a result of it, is the fact that he

was the most confirmed of Tories. "It was not for me," he said when telling of his interview with George III in the royal library, "to bandy civilities with my Sovereign."¹ With reference to affairs of state as far as the King and the King's government was responsible for them, Johnson was almost ready to declare "whatever is, is right."

We do not need Johnson's comments, however, to discover the nature of Johnson's London. The record of all his experiences is so complete that we can follow him through a series of tableaux which start with the time when he was living on £30 a year, past the decade from 1748 to 1758 when he was laying the foundations of his fame at Gough Square, Fleet Street; further through the seven years in which he consorted with the lawyers in Staple Inn, Gray's Inn, and the Inner Temple, and on through the last nineteen years of his life when he resided in Johnson's Court and Bolt Court, and enjoyed the hospitalities of the Thrals at Streatham and the pension of £300 a year from the Crown. Thus, for more than one-third of a century he was living in the little district bounded by the river, Chancery Lane, Holborn, and the Fleet Market.

¹ Boswell, *Johnson*, ed. Birkbeck Hill, II, 135.



DR. JOHNSON'S HOUSE IN THE TEMPLE
(From an old print)

In Mr. Birkbeck Hill's great index to Boswell's *Life* more than five double-column pages are filled with the mere references to streets, courts, taverns, coffee-houses, clubs, theaters, prisons, summer gardens, offices, residences, and churches among which the great man moved in his daily round. He himself was the most interesting spectacle of his day, and he pervaded the city just as he pervades any history which deals with the literary life of his period.

His kingdom was in the strip between the old City and the fashionable West End. The distinguished aristocracy might make as much as they chose of the sumptuous region off toward Hyde Park, but he was content with the older, simpler neighborhood. The greatness of his power is demonstrated in the prestige of the club, which, forming around him, was quite as exclusive as Almack's, much less expensive, and much more worth while. Its permanent establishment was as great as any of Johnson's achievements, for it marked perhaps more emphatically than any other one thing in its day the complete emancipation of literature from fashion, and the coming of a day when neither riches nor poverty could of themselves distinguish a member of the republic of letters.

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CHAPTER VII

THE LONDON OF LAMB AND BYRON

By the beginning of the nineteenth century London had become an enormous metropolis, the greater in mere area because it consisted almost entirely of comparatively small dwellings not more than four floors high, and because the number of large parks within the city was supplemented by scores, if not hundreds, of open squares. Yet in the main the points of literary interest were still in those old parts of town which had been traversed by Goldsmith and Addison and Milton and even Shakespeare. Of the mere vulgar bigness of "this colossal emporium of men, wealth, arts, and intellectual power" an idea can be gained from that chapter in De Quincey's *Autobiography* which he entitled "The Nation of London." As he entered town he was almost overwhelmed by "the blind sense of mysterious grandeur and Babylonian confusion,"¹ until, on reaching his inn, he discovered that he was quite equidistant from Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's. After due cogitation, deciding

¹ De Quincey, *Autobiography*, ed. Masson, chap. viii, p. 182.

in favor of the latter, he very likely reached it by the familiar route of the Strand, Fleet Street, and Ludgate Hill. He might have chosen between the Cathedral and the Abbey any time these five hundred years.

Occasionally, in connection with this period, one's attention is caught by the introduction into common London life of neighborhoods which in former times were regarded as distant outlying regions. Leigh Hunt lived in a populous neighborhood out at Hampstead. The Heath, that wild waste in which some of the most thrilling of *Clarissa Harlowe's* adventures were enacted,¹ was soon to be converted into a park, and Jack Straw's Castle, ancient rendezvous of highwaymen, into a public house. Hampstead was still a stage-ride from town, and the intervening country still supplied business for gentlemen of the road; but apparently they were content with small game.² Coleridge, during the last sixteen years of his life, lodged still farther out, at Mr.

¹ Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa Harlowe*, ed. Leslie Stephen, III, letters LVIII, LIX, and following.

² Charles Lamb tells of the mishap of his tailor, who "was robbed the other day coming with his wife and family in a one-horse shay from Hampstead; the villains rifled him of four guineas, some shillings and half-pence, and a bundle of customers' measures, which they swore were bank notes." Talfourd, *Life and Letters of Charles Lamb*, chap. iv, letter to Southey (1798).

Gillman's in Highgate. So much for the region to the northward. It becomes evident, too, that down along the river in Westminster and in Kensington the polite and expensive West End was slowly and continuously extending itself. The City proper was now almost depopulated as a residence district, but the stretch from Ludgate Circus to Charing Cross was still a haunt for the men of letters. This was Lamb's home neighborhood; Byron was just beyond between Trafalgar Square and Hyde Park, and both of them from time to time invaded the mid-region between.

The feelings of these two men for London were in utter contrast. To Lamb it was the Elysium in which his life was absorbed.

I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments, as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature. The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street; the innumerable trades, tradesmen, and customers, coaches, wagons, playhouses; all the bustle and wickedness round about Covent Garden; the very women of the Town; the watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles—life awake, if you awake, at all hours of the night; the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street; the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print-shops, the old-book stalls, parsons cheapening books, coffee-houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the

pantomimes—London itself a pantomime and a masquerade—all these things work themselves into my mind and feed me without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impels me into night walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much life.¹

But to Byron it was the passing scene of many a bitter misadventure, a desert of strangers in which society was too often more painful than solitude. For Lamb it offered a somber but placid threescore years of toilsome straitness, with the boyhood of a charity scholar and the declining years of a pensioner. For Byron it afforded a seat in the House of Lords, and the restless prelude to a life of notoriety and dissipation, luxury and splendor, spasmodic effort and startling success—a meteoric life, wholly inclosed in the longer and more conventional career of the gentle essayist.

Byron's real experience in London as a man lasted only for about seven years, from 1808 to 1815, though he was born in Holles Street, Cavendish Square, and was frequently brought to town for short visits in boyhood and youth. All of his residences were in the extremely fashion-

¹ Talfourd, *Life and Letters of Charles Lamb*, chap. vii, letter to Wordsworth, January 30, 1801.

able district within a few score yards of Piccadilly, the three-quarter-mile stretch from Piccadilly Circus on Regent Street to the southeast corner of Hyde Park. While here he published the works which won him popular fame. From St. James's Street he drove down across St. James's Park to take his seldom occupied seat in the House of Lords, and from No. 13, Piccadilly Terrace, he left London, pursued by the shrill execrations of Mrs. Grundy.

However lonely he may have been in his repugnance to London as a whole, he was apparently happy in the welcome extended him in the two houses where literature and exclusive society joined hands. The first of these belonged to his famous neighbor, Samuel Rogers, the banker, poet, and patron of the arts. For more than fifty years from 1800 on Rogers made it his avocation to play host. Joanna Baillie, Charlotte Brontë, Thomas Campbell, Frances Burney, the elder D'Israeli, Thomas Moore, Irving, Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, Dickens and all his group—these are the mere beginnings of the list of literati who lifted Rogers' knocker. And among them in his day was Byron. "If you enter his house," wrote the author of *Don Juan*, "his drawing room, his library, you of yourself say, this is not the



HOLLAND HOUSE (The south front)
(From a photograph)

dwelling of a common mind. There is not a gem, a coin, a book thrown aside on the chimney-piece, his sofa, his table, that does not bespeak an almost fastidious elegance in the possessor." Rogers' house was the home of genial informality. People could drop in singly or in small groups and be sure of enjoying clever chat which was not always free from acidity. Washington Irving, writing to Moore about their common host, said in 1824: "I dined tête-à-tête with him some time ago, and he served up his friends as he served up his fish, with a squeeze of lemon over each. It was very piquant, but it rather set my teeth on edge."

At Holland House, in contrast, where Rogers himself introduced Byron, the scale of things, as well as the temper of Lady Holland, was in part responsible for a more exalted level of talk. Animadversions that would rise to the lips in a city house with a thirty-foot front were not apt to feel perfectly at home in "a venerable chamber in which all the antique gravity of a college library was blended with all that female grace and wit could devise to embellish a drawing-room."¹ Moreover, the "female grace and wit" that presided over this salon were the possessions of a suavely dictatorial lady who

¹ See Macaulay's essay on Lord Holland, 1841.

had a very definite idea of the narrow channel within which she wanted the talk to run, and quickly dammed up any threatened breach in the banks. As a result the conversation was more classic and less racy than that under Rogers' roof.

Holland House itself has had an interesting history. It is a modern structure in comparison with many of London's landmarks, yet it was built in 1607, the year when the first of the thirteen colonies was founded. It is an elaborately complicated mansion of which an unamiable remark by Sir Walter Scott was more than half justified when he said "it resembles many respectable matrons who, having been absolutely ugly during youth, acquire by age an air of dignity." It stands unchanged today in a noble stretch of open grounds a half-mile southwest of Kensington Gardens. When it was under confiscation during the Protectorate, Cromwell withdrew here to take counsel with his lieutenants; Addison, in the unhappy prosperity of his latest years, lived here as its master from 1716 to his death in 1719; but Holland House was in the heyday of its fame in the first half of the nineteenth century when Lord and Lady Holland entertained with such *éclat* that the youthful

Lord Byron was drawn naturally into their circle. Naturally, and yet somewhat surprisingly, for had not all parties concerned been willing to forget certain bitter lines¹ in "English Bards," Byron and the Hollands would never have known each other as friends.

¹ It was two days after the delivery of Byron's maiden speech in the House of Lords, in the preparation of which Lord Holland had advised him, that the publication of *Childe Harold* made him the lion of the day. The first edition was sold off in a little over a week. Everybody wanted to meet him, from the Crown Prince and Beau Brummel down; and then the fascinations of popularity in a day when court morals had degenerated to the Restoration level made an easy conquest of him. His writing, though abundant at this time, was incidental. "What do the reviewers mean by 'elaborate'?" *Lara* I wrote while undressing, after coming home from balls and masquerades in the year of revelry

¹ Dunedin! view thy children with delight,
 They write for food—and feed because they write:
 And lest, when heated with the unusual grape,
 Some glowing thoughts should to the press escape,
 And tinge with red the female reader's cheek,
 My lady skims the cream of each critique;
 Breathes o'er the page her purity of soul,
 Reforms each error, and refines the whole.

See entire passage, ll. 541-60.

1814." Of his own surroundings he has written explicitly.¹

Some
 Talk about poetry and "rack and manger,"
 And ugliness, disease, as toil and trouble;—
 I wish they knew the life of a young noble.
 They are young, but know not youth—it is
 anticipated
 Handsome but wasted, rich without a sou;
 Their vigor in a thousand arms is dissipated;
 Their cash comes *from*, their wealth goes *to*, a
 Jew.

These and the less savory lines that follow describe his life from 1811 to 1814—a life conventionalized and actually sanctioned by the society of his day. It was under the influence of the Regent who was to become George IV, a gentlemen concerning whose character the comments of Shelley and Thackeray² have left us little to doubt. His vanity, self-indulgence, and general laxity of character made him the rival of Charles II, and surrounded him with a group of people whose morals were hardly superior to those of the Restoration group. Most picturesque of them all was Beau Brummel, a man of

¹ *Don Juan*, XI, 74, 75.

² Thackeray, *Four Georges*: George the Fourth; and Shelley, *Oedipus Tyrannus, or Swellfoot the Tyrant*.

middle-class origin, who by his extraordinary arrogance succeeded in making himself the leader of the elect for nearly twenty years. With his pet companions he took possession of White's, and made his own throne-room the bay window, which not even other members of the club presumed to enter. The Regent, until the time of their estrangement, was a frankly secondary figure in the group, though his presence was responsible for its prestige and for the high esteem in which low morals were consequently held.

\ I can see old gentlemen now among us, of perfect good-breeding, of quiet lives, with venerable gray heads, fondling their grandchildren; and look at them, and wonder at what they were once. That gentleman of the grand old school, when he was in the 10th Hussars, and dined at the Prince's table, would fall under it night after night. Night after night that gentleman sat at Brookes's or Raggett's over the dice. If, in the petulance of play or drink, that gentleman spoke a sharp word to his neighbor, he and the other would infallibly go out and try to shoot each other the next morning. That gentleman would drive his friend Richmond the black boxer down to Moulsey, and hold his coat, and shout and swear, and hurrah with delight, whilst the black man was beating Dutch Sam the Jew. That gentleman would take a manly pleasure in pulling his own coat off and thrashing a bargeman in a street row. That gentleman has been in a watch-house. That gentleman, so exquisitely polite

with ladies in a drawing-room, so loftily courteous, if he talked now as he used among men in his youth, would swear so as to make your hair stand on end.¹

The fact that Byron was suddenly and violently ostracized by the society of which such as these were the fine flower was a mere accident arising from his celebrity and the consequent notoriety of his marital troubles. These fitful spasms of outraged respectability occur from time to time all along the course of social history among those very people who, as a rule, overlook or indorse "the short and simple scandals" of averagely inconspicuous rakes and rogues. After his twenty-seventh year Byron knew London no more.

As one turns from Byron to Lamb he makes his way eastward, past Trafalgar Square, Charing Cross, the Strand, and Temple Bar, which was still standing, to the old City. Few men have actually spent more time than Charles Lamb within the precincts of the Temple, for he was born and passed the first seven years of his life here, and later returned to live consecutively from 1800 to 1817. In his essay on "The Benchers of the Inner Temple" he gives an impression of the quality and atmosphere of the great collection of courts and buildings as it appeared to him,

¹Thackery, *Four Georges*, George the Fourth.



FLEET STREET AND TEMPLE BAR AS LAMB KNEW THEM IN BOYHOOD
(From Ackermann's *Repository of Arts*)

a resident; the wider suggestiveness of the superb establishment as a treasure-house of noble memories has been dwelt upon by Thackeray in *Pendennis*.¹ Lamb conjures up to view "its church, its halls, its garden, its fountain . . . its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses." He tells of the terrace, or parade, on which the old benchers used to strut in solemn state; of such exponents of the law as Samuel Salt, Thomas Coventry, and Peter Pierson, who embodied the dignity of the Temple; and of such faithful servitors as Lovel, who guarded the interests of the dignitaries. As to what an important contributor to the traditions of the Temple Charles Lamb himself was he naturally writes very little; but his friends have taken care in their letters and more formal memorials not to allow him and his hospitality to be forgotten. As literary gathering-places the tavern of the early eighteenth century, and the coffee-house and club which supplanted it, seem both to have yielded the palm in the early nineteenth century to private hospitality. At any rate the literary gatherings in Lamb's day, which correspond to those in which Ben Jonson and Dryden and Addison and Goldsmith figured, were held in homes rather than public places.

¹ *Pendennis*, chaps. xxviii, xxix, and especially xlix.

Those at Holland House, at Lady Blessington's, and at Samuel Rogers' were the most sumptuous, but the simpler evenings at Forster's in Lincoln's Inn Fields and with Charles and Mary Lamb in the Inner Temple were no less memorable.¹ Of his earliest Temple quarters at the upper end of King's Bench Walk, Lamb had said:

I shall have all the privacy of a house without the encumbrance, and shall be able to lock my friends out so often as I desire to hold free converse with my immortal mind, for my present lodgings resemble a minister's levee.²

Yet he seems to have been incorrigibly hospitable, for his Wednesday evenings and indeed most of his other evenings belonged finally to his visiting friends. The best record is of his rooms at 4 Inner Temple Lane—a simple home with low ceilings, an open fire, worn furniture, and Hogarth prints about the walls. The evening began with cards—whence his characteristic comment, “M., if dirt was trumps, what hands you would hold!” Later the theater group, including play-goer, critic, actor, and manager, would drop in. Food and drink were substantial and the talk became more spirited as plate and glass were emptied. Con-

¹ Talfourd, *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*, chap. ix, see “Lamb's Wednesday Nights Compared with the Evenings at Holland House.”

² Talfourd, chap. v, letter to Manning (1800).

versation was uncontrolled by anything except the nature of the speakers, but it was full of the subjects which are unseen and eternal. There was less politics than philosophy, more gravity than mirth; on the whole, that intermixture of these and other elements that one would expect to find in a group which included Hunt, Hazlitt, Charles Kemble, Talfourd, Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and was presided over by Charles Lamb.¹ Perhaps it is true that "only antiquarians and literary amateurs care to look at" the Temple precincts "with much interest," but to them there is quiet fascination not only in crossing the courts trod by such pleasant fictions as Sir Roger de Coverley and the Spectator, but in sauntering among the quiet and devious passages which led to quarters occupied by Johnson and Goldsmith and Lamb and Thackeray.

\The experiences at Christ's Hospital, which "Elia" has recorded in two essays, have gone far to dignify the school, though the picturesque dress of the "Blue Coat" boys as they wear it even today² prevents either Londoner or casual visitor

¹ See "Lamb's Wednesday Nights," etc.

² The essays are "Recollections of Christ's Hospital" and "Christ's Hospital Five-and-Thirty Years Ago." The dress is a blue coat or gown, a red leather girdle, yellow stockings, and a clergyman's band around the neck.

from forgetting this famous foundation of Edward VI. Like Charterhouse it was originally the site of a monastery, the land a gift to the Franciscans by one John Ewin in 1225. His reward, the prefix Saint, served apparently as the equivalent of a modern honorary A.M. The buildings and their contents were presented by common citizens, lord mayors, nobles of high degree, and even royalty. In the dissolution of the monasteries Greyfriars was not spared, the church edifice for a long time serving for the two parishes of St. Ewin and St. Nicholas Shambles. A dozen years before Shakespeare's birth it was repaired for the benefit of the "poor fatherless children and others" in whose behalf Edward made his endowment. Though it was in the extreme northwest angle of the city, just north of Newgate Street, the Great Fire of 1666 reached and passed it, even o'erleaping the wall in this district. The rebuilding which followed in 1680 and the subsequent years put Christ's Hospital into the general shape in which the seven-year-old Charles Lamb found it when he entered in 1782.

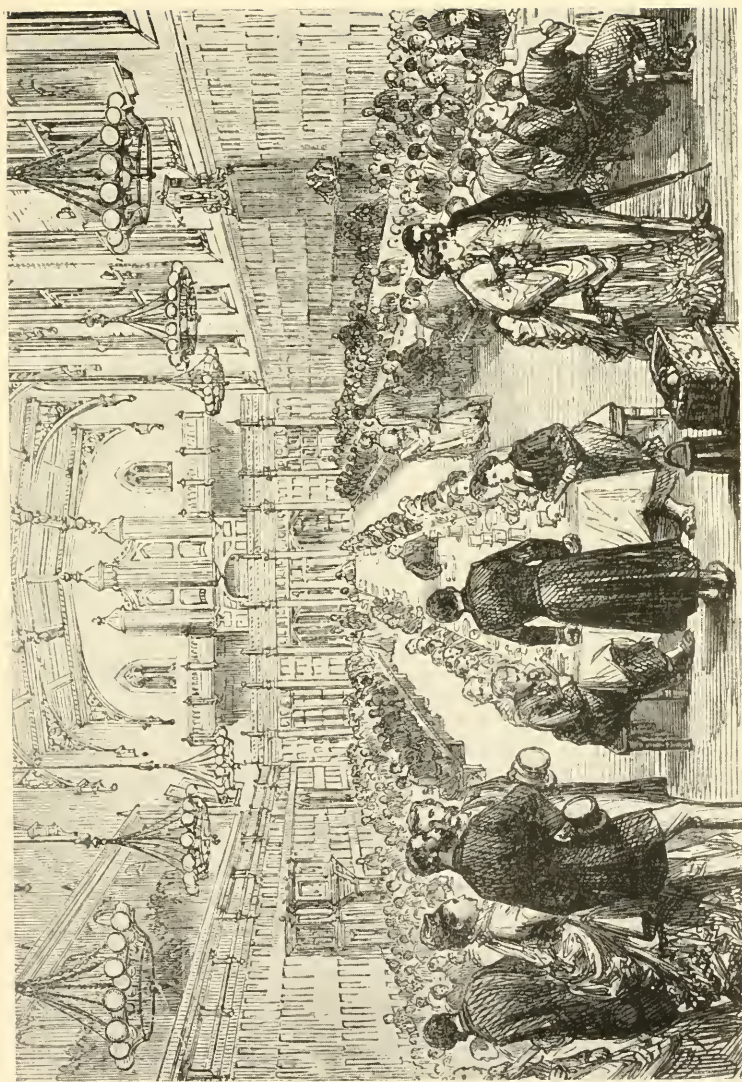
The gentle "Elia" is a little amusing in his ingenious attempts to show that Christ's Hospital was not a "charity school" for foundlings and the children of the poor. If circumlocution were all

that was necessary, the trick would be turned in the sentence which explains that the school served "to comfort the desponding parent with the thought that, without diminishing the stock which is imperiously demanded to furnish the more pressing and homely wants of our nature, he has disposed of one or perhaps more out of a numerous offspring." He points out that the establishment was antique and magnificent in its appointments, generous and attentive in its care of the hundreds of boys—and then spoils all by referring to them as "sons of charity." So they truly were, Charity acting *in loco parentis* while they were in her keeping. "Boy!" said the famous master, James Boyer, to little Samuel Coleridge when he was crying, the first day of his return after the holidays, "Boy! the school is your father! Boy! the school is your mother! Boy! the school is your brother! the school is your sister! the school is your first cousin, and your second cousin, and all the rest of your relations! Let's have no more crying."

∨There is no account of Christ's Hospital which rivals in length and loving kindness the one presented by Leigh Hunt in his autobiography.¹

¹ See *Autobiography of Leigh Hunt*, London, 1860, chaps. iii and iv, pp. 49-106.

He tells in detail the theory of the school, its medial position "between the patrician pretentiousness of such schools as Eton and Westminster and the plebeian submission of the Charity schools." He displays pride in its democratic membership and more pride in the prestige of its products, of whom Coleridge and Charles Lamb were the greatest. All this, however, together with the arrangement of wards, the dress, the daily routine, the organization of the five schools, could be found in any good cyclopedia. The human quality of the institution is the feature which Hunt develops best. He presents the Monitors the Grecians, and the Deputy Grecians—the great gods of the school. He pictures the evening preachers—Mr. Sandiford, who "had a habit of dipping up and down over his book like a chicken drinking" and was no more audible than Mr. Salt, who "might as well have hummed a tune to their diaphragms!" And he contrasts these with two other nameless clergymen, "one of them with a sort of flat, high voice, who had a remarkable way of making a ladder of it," and the other of whom was hailed with delight by the boys because he read the prayers so fast. He presents the undergrammar master, Mr. Field, a harmless dilettante, and the tyrant Boyer, who



SUPPER AT CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.
(From an old print)

even in far retrospect seemed to fill him with horror. Poor little stammering Hunt had been bred to a sensitiveness which was a poor preparation for the violence of his schooldays, and yet he seemed to look back upon them all with a surpassing affection as he wrote about them in the story of his life.

Lamb also recalls some of the reasons for tears in the underfeeding and underheating, the mistreatment by monitors, and the horrors which came to the innocent through the public punishments of the guilty. On the whole, however, with him too the more genial memories held sway, and most of all those which had to do with the various pageantries which punctuated their calendar:

Our visits to the Tower, where, by ancient privilege, we had free access to all the curiosities; our solemn processions through the city at Easter, with the Lord Mayor's largess of buns, wine, and a shilling, and the festive questions and civic pleasantries of the dispensing Aldermen, which were more to us than all the rest of the banquet; our stately suppers in public where the well-lighted hall and the stately confluence of well-dressed company who came to see us made the whole look more like a concert or assembly than a scene of plain bread and cheese collation; the annual orations upon St. Matthew's Day . . . our hymns and anthems and well-toned organ; the doleful tune of the burial anthem chanted

in the solemn cloisters upon the seldom occurring funeral of some school-fellow; the festivities at Christmas.

The school friendship of Addison and Steele at Charterhouse in the late seventeenth century was no more notable than that of Lamb and Coleridge at the neighboring Christ's Hospital about one hundred years later.

The passage from school to a clerk's desk was made easy by a friend of one of the Old Benchers of the Inner Temple. For nearly six months Charles worked in the South Sea House, which years later became the subject of the opening essay of *Elia*. Nearly three-quarters of a century had passed since the pricking of the famous South Sea Bubble, the most famous of "get-rich-quick schemes"; but in the old house of trade some forms of business were still followed through, and the Blue Coat boy for a while joined the "Noah's Ark." "Odd fishes. A lay monastery. Domestic retainers in a great house kept more for show than use. Yet pleasant fellows, full of chat—not a few among them had arrived at considerable proficiency on the German flute."

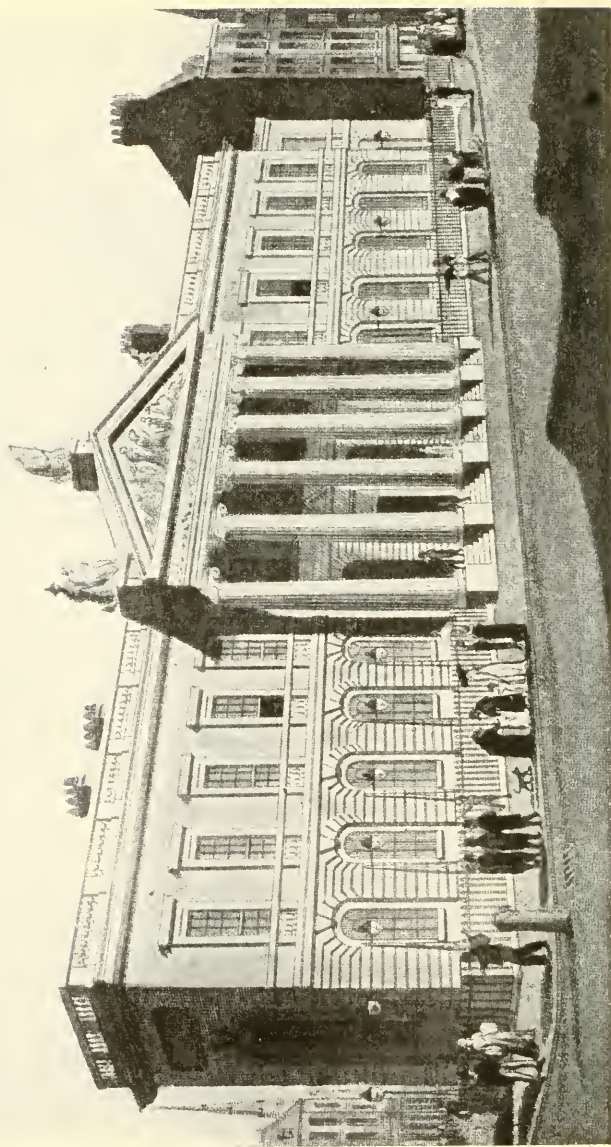
The East India House, in which he served for a third of a century, leaving it only as "a superannuated man," was a very different sort of institution, more conservative and longer lived,

the greatest trading-house of its sort ever established. Here for weary years except for Sundays, two short holidays, and one poor little week's outing, he lived other people's lives rather than his own. The short walk to and from work was at first his own, but as friends and acquaintances increased, afternoon breathing spells as well as all his evenings were taken from him. So the solitary morning walks became like "treading on sands of gold," and in despair of ever finding solitude he wrote, "I am never C. L. but always C. L. and Co."

Once well installed in his India House clerkship, Charles Lamb settled down into quiet content. It was a long climb to a firm and comfortable perch on top of his high stool, for the first three years were without pay and the next five at a very modest wage; but from 1800 on, between his salary, his perquisites, and his private resources he was in no danger from the wolf, and actually much more comfortable in his mind about money matters than was the spendthrift Byron. If he had been unhappy in his long routine he never could have written as he did in grateful acknowledgment "to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world." Moreover, all during these thirty-odd years he had plenty of diversion.

There was, for instance, the theater. With his sister he went on many a night, delighting in the cry of "Bill of the Play!" in the smell of the links on the way, in the "roar of hoarse voices round the door and mud-shine on the pavement," in the first strains of the preliminary music, and in the leisurely settling in place for the delights of the evening.

He may possibly have been at Covent Garden during the seventy-one nights in the autumn of 1809 when the Old Price Riots were in progress. John Kemble in rebuilding the theater had proposed among other alterations to put in a number of private boxes and to raise the prices of seats in the pit and gallery. The pit and gallery had something to say about this. For three full months not a single performance could be heard. The ingenuity of the town was taxed for fresh noise-making devices and the certainty that no voice could be audible resulted in the adoption of signs which were flaunted by the champions of the two parties. At times the whole house would indulge in what was called the O.P. Dance—a military stamping in unison. The rise of the curtain was a sign for the audience to turn their backs and view the fun in front of the footlights. No arrests were possible. No arguments pre-



THE INDIA HOUSE IN CHARLES LAMB'S DAY
(From Ackermann's *Repository of Arts*)

vailed, and finally the Old-Price rioters won their point, Kemble surrendered, all court actions were withdrawn, and the British public had their way.

\So much has to be said of the horrors of prison experience in London that it is a relief to encounter the strange account of Leigh Hunt's two years under lock and key at Horsemonger Lane. The jailer was eccentric and only negatively venal. The under-jailer, a frightful man to look at, seems to have been rarely sympathetic. Hunt was not in good health, could not brook the confinement in the meaner parts of the prison, and was not able to receive special authorization to move into the jailer's house; but he did by indirection secure permission to go to the prison infirmary, and here he secured possession of a ward. This

I turned into a noble room. I papered the walls with a trellis of roses; I had the ceiling coloured with clouds and sky; the bared windows I screened with Venetian blinds; and when my book-cases were set up with their busts, and flowers and a pianoforte made their appearance, perhaps there was not a handsomer room on that side the water. I took a pleasure, when a stranger knocked at the door, to see him come in and stare about him. The surprise on issuing from the Borough, and passing through the avenues of a gaol, was dramatic.

Charles Lamb declared there was no other such room, except in a fairy tale.¹

Outside of this was a garden big enough for real exercise. As the prisoner went to this, he dressed himself as if for a long walk, and setting forth requested his wife not to wait dinner if he came late. For his wife and family were with him, and with his books about him his faithful friends almost daily in attendance, and generous offers of money coming from various sides, he spent two years in the midst of comforts, which though they themselves illustrated the rottenness of prison justice, showed that an experience behind the bars was not always one of unrelieved horror.

Charles Lamb visiting Leigh Hunt in a rose-bowered prison with a private garden—it does not sound very real; but it was like much of Lamb's experience. He transformed his own circumstances and enjoyed so thoroughly the fruits of his own imaginings that he lost sight of the sordid and the vicious. He did not close his eyes; he simply did not see. All the while he was under the spell of London. In passages strangely like similar songs by Whitman, quiet, methodical, whimsical Charles Lamb chants the paean so often recurring in the pages of the

¹ See *Autobiography of Leigh Hunt*, London, 1860, p. 238.

American "nondescript monster, which yet had terrible eyes and a Buffalo strength."

Streets, streets, streets, markets, theatres, churches. Covent Gardens, shops sparkling with pretty faces of industrious milliners, neat seamstresses, ladies cheapening [i.e. bargaining], gentlemen behind counters lying, authors in the streets with spectacles, . . . lamps lit at night, pastry-cooks' and silversmiths' shops, beautiful Quakers of Pentonville, noise of coaches, drowsy cry of mechanic watchmen at night, with bucks reeling home drunk; if you happen to wake at midnight, cries of Fire and Stop-thief; inns of court, with their learned air, and halls, and butteries, just like Cambridge colleges; old book-stalls, Jeremy Taylors, Burtons of Melancholy, and Religio Medicis on every stall. These are thy pleasures, O London with-the-many-sins.¹

Writing to Wordsworth, Lamb confessed—almost boasted, that, compared to the town, the country was meaningless to him; but when Wordsworth sojourned "in London's vast domain,"² the spirit of nature was upon him even there, so that the metropolis was like "the meanest flower" in being full of inexpressible significance to him. Viewing the city as a visitor, as is often true of the discriminating traveler, he obtained a clearer synthetic idea of what it all meant than

¹ Talfourd, chaps. iv and v, letters to Manning (1800).

² Wordsworth, *Prelude*, Book VII, "Residence in London."

most of its residents had. He saw the main show-buildings, visited the museums and galleries, floated along on the endless stream of people, and speculated on the mysteries hidden behind all these passing faces. He went to Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and Sadler's Wells, to all sort of plays at all sorts of theaters; and then from these entertainments "to others titled higher," such as the law courts, the House of Commons, and Bartholomew Fair. They were all full of meaning to him—equally with a poor artisan holding a sickly child for a moment stolen from work, and a beggar, blind and labeled. For every one of these chance sights the "huge fermenting mass of humankind" served as a solemn background against which their general relationship to the whole scheme of things seemed to be made clear. In all the chaos of apparently unrelated trivial objects he felt an under sense of that "something far more deeply interfused" which made forest solitudes and city streets alike tremulously full of half-revealed mystery. Charles Lamb was affected to tears by the torrent of humanity pouring through the Strand. Wordsworth was strangely moved in moments when the tide of life was still, and the streets were empty. Never was his soul more deeply stirred among his own retreats than

when he composed these lines upon Westminster Bridge:

\ Earth has not anything to show more fair:
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty:
 This City now doth, like a garment, wear
 The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep:
 The river glideth at his own sweet will:
 Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!

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Cowley, Mrs. H., *The Town before You* (1795).

Eyre, E. J., *High Life in the City* (1810).

Fitch, Clyde, *Beau Brummel* (1890).

Jackman, Isaac, *The Man of Parts, or a Trip to London*, (1785).

Jamison, R. F., *Living in London* (1815).

O'Keeffe, John, *Tony Lumpkin in Town* (1772); *The London Hermit* (1793).

Tobin, John, *The Faro Table* (1816).

Wallace, Lady, *The Ton, or the Follies of Fashion* (1788).

CHAPTER VIII

DICKENS' LONDON

It is hard to generalize upon the London of Dickens' day. It is too near to the present and too much is known about it. Every generalization is in a fair way to be snowed under by a multitude of exceptions, so that each historian is disposed to dissent from all the others and to doubt his own conclusions as well. At the worst, however, there are a few features which are assented to even by the doctors who disagree. Chesterton protests¹ against Gissing's assertion that "the world in which Dickens grew up was a hard and cruel world"; but Chesterton takes no exception to the mention of "its gross feeding, its fierce sports, its fighting and foul humor," asking only that we do not forget the "wind of hope and humanity" that was blowing through the period.

For evidence of the feeding and fighting, the fierceness and foulness, one need go no farther than Pierce Egan's *Life in London; or, The Rambles and Adventures of Bob Tallyho, Esq., and*

¹ G. K. Chesterton, *Charles Dickens, a Critical Study*, chap. i.

His Cousin the Hon. Tom Dashall, through the Metropolis, Exhibiting a Living Picture of Fashionable Characters, Manners, and Amusements in High and Low Life. The first part of this appeared in 1821 when Dickens was nine years old. It became widely popular, was dramatized for London and New York, was variously imitated, and was concluded by Egan with further adventures "in and out of London" in 1828.¹ The beau ideal of Tom and Bob is described as a man who "can drink, swear, tell stories, cudgel, box, and smoke with any one; having by his intercourse with society fitted himself for all companions."² The life of a frolicsome fellow is a program of "swearing, tearing—ranting, jaunting—slashing, smashing—smacking, cracking—rumbling, tumbling—laughing, quaffing—smoking, joking—swaggering, staggering."³ This is a loud echo of the more savage frolicking of the eighteenth-century Scowlers and Mohocks, quite as noisy, perhaps, but certainly less brutal. In an age of wooden pavements and rubber tires we are all

¹ Eight years later Dickens showed the influence of this work in the fact that his *Pickwick Papers* were also issued in monthly instalments, accompanied with illustrations and based on a similar loose succession of adventures.

² *Life in London*, I, chap. iv.

³ *Ibid.*, I, chap. ix.



REGENT STREET
(From Pierce Egan's *Life in London*)



MILD DIVERSIONS FOR TOM AND JERRY
(From Pierce Egan's *Life in London*)

becoming like Ben Jonson's "Morose, a gentleman who loves no noise." Yet less than a hundred years ago this is the way in which the half-price people came in during the middle of an evening's performance at the select Drury Lane Theater:

Jumping over boxes and obtaining seats by any means, regardless of politeness or even of decorum—Bucks and Bloods warm from the pleasures of the bottle—dashing Belles and flaming Beaux, squabbling and almost fighting—rendered the amusements before the curtain of a momentary interest, which appeared to obliterate the recollection of what they had previously witnessed. In the meantime, the Gods in the gallery issued forth an abundant variety of discordant sounds, from their elevated situation. Growling of bears, grunting of hogs, braying of donkeys, gobbling of turkeys, hissing of geese, the catcall, and the loud shrill whistle, were heard in one mingling concatenation of excellent imitation and undistinguished variety.²

On the tenth page occurs a coach race which ends in an overturn and the vociferous outcries of a fat woman who was thrown on top of a quickset-hedge. In the course of the story there is a scene at the Bow Street Police Court, at "the residence of a Bug-destroyer in the Strand," at a burning timber yard, at various nocturnal and noonday hells, at several street fights, cock fights

² *Ibid.*, chap. x.

and prize fights, at a bear-baiting and a coronation, and at almost every level of social diversion between. This is a strong diet. One is reassured to find that in the end Corinthian Kate commits suicide, Bob Logic dies impoverished, Corinthian Tom breaks his neck in a horse race, and Jerry alone is left to reform, marry discreetly, and become a justice of the peace. A valiant moral adorns the tale; but it was not the moral which made it popular enough to stage and to imitate: it was the high popularity of the rough-and-ready action in which *Life in London* abounded both in fiction and in fact.

Yet a change was coming in the recreations of men. Thackeray, writing a quarter of a century after Pierce Egan, was quick to recognize this, and almost ready to lament it. So also was the gentle Quaker lady of whom Mr. Birrell tells¹ as remarking "in heightened tones at a dinner table where the subject of momentary conversation was a late prize fight, 'O pity was it that ever corruption should have crept in amongst them!' 'Amongst whom,' inquired her immediate neighbor. 'Amongst the bruisers of England!' was the terrific rejoinder. Deep were her blushes—and yet how easy to forgive her!" Coaching and the

¹ Augustine Birrell, *Res Judicatae*, in the essay on George Borrow.

love of fine animals were still the love of many who might have said with David Copperfield's casual acquaintance in the tall white hat, "'Orses and dorgs is some men's fancy. They are wittles and drink to me, lodging, wife and children, reading, writing, and 'rithmetic, snuff, tobacker, and sleep."

"The Road," said Thackeray, "was an institution, the Ring was an institution. Men rallied round them and, not without a kind conservatism, expatiated upon the benefits with which they endowed the country. . . . To give and take a black eye was not unusual or derogatory in a gentleman, to drive a stage coach the enjoyment, the emulation of generous youth." The pleasures of table were not as a rule epicurean. In the last century England has progressed toward temperance and America toward abstinence. In this country today if the host ask any question it is, "Will you have something to drink?" In England today the query is, "What will you have to drink?" In Dickens' day the assumption was that a man would drink freely or tell the reason why. On social occasions good fellowship among men recommended imbibing to the point of hilarity, and good form apparently set no annoying maximum limit.

As for "the wind of hope and humanity" that was blowing through the period, there is sufficient evidence in the effect of the great revolutions with which the eighteenth century had come to an end. A great economic movement so important that it has received the special name of "The Industrial Revolution" was the natural attendant of these political upheavals. The establishment of the factory system brought with it at the outset long hours, low pay, and terribly unwise employment of women and children; but the time had passed for either unlimited or unpunished exploitation of labor, as the development of regulative legislation began to show. While Francis Place and William Cobbett were stimulating action in Parliament, Robert Owen and the factory reformers were toiling for direct improvement of social conditions; and while these men were rewarded by slow and tentative results of their work, the labors of John Howard and Mrs. Fry brought about the first beginnings of prison sanitation; finally the treatment of offenders against the law was being made less barbarous through the efforts of Bentham and Romilly. In 1830 was the last punishment on the pillory, and too late, but at last, came the last public execution. The reader who expects to find explicit discussions of these problems in the



THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE, FROM OLD PALACE YARD.



THE KING'S ENTRANCE TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE OLD HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BURNED IN 1834
(From an old print)

great novels of the day is doomed to certain disappointment. Only certain of the more obvious and picturesque conditions are introduced; yet, each in his own fashion, the story-tellers of the period reflected the general social conditions which lay in the background.

Few other English men of letters of the first rank have so completely woven London into their work as Dickens; for few other writers were ever blessed and cursed with experiences quite like his. As a boy, after ten years of care-free comfort he was suddenly plunged into two years of such poverty that he had to work in a blacking factory while his father was a prisoner for debt in the Marshalsea. In those days he learned London—the London of *David Copperfield* and *Oliver Twist*, of *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *The Tale of Two Cities*; and he learned to hate it savagely. Then came a second period of belated schooling, then a clerkship with a Gray's Inn solicitor; then experience as a reporter, first a "cub" but soon an expert in the House of Commons;¹ then his early triumph as author of *Pickwick*; and then the thirty-odd years in which he tasted "honor, love, obedience, troops of friends" before his

¹ This was in the old House of Commons, burned down in 1834.

death at the age of fifty-eight in 1870. In these years when he ran the whole scale from abject poverty to almost splendid wealth, he was living in the surroundings which became the backgrounds for his stories. The streets and buildings among which his characters moved are many of them unchanged now. The social conditions against which he inveighed are altered partly because of the vigor of his successful attacks.

In the course of his career he thus became acquainted with life as only that man may who by the accident of birth has been started well toward the bottom of the social composition, and has filtered his way up through one stratum after another until he has stood before kings. Thus Dickens learned life; but life for him was centered in London. Though he knew it completely, he knew "by heart" only those parts of it in which he lived and worked in the second dozen years of his life. Of these he wrote mainly when he wrote of London at all, but never more explicitly than in the *Sketches by Boz*, which were his first published writings.

Those twenty-five, entitled "scenes," are striking in their materials and in the very order in which they are presented. First, by morning and night, the streets to which he had the key—

those "secret passages" which are "lined with houses and roofed with stars"; then the shops, a half-dozen kinds of them and all either shabby and sordid, or on the way to being so before long; then London at play, in the tea-gardens, on the river, at public dinners, Vauxhall, Greenwich Fair, Astley's, and the private theaters; then four on coaches, cabs, omnibuses, and the tribe of Tony Weller; then one on Doctors' Commons where young Charles had served as clerk, and one on Parliament where he had reported the speeches in the House of Commons; and finally "The Criminal Courts" and "A Visit to Newgate." These two hundred pages of "scenes" contain practically all the tableaux that are to be found in the rest of his work except a few domestic interiors, and there are plenty of these to be found in the other groups of the *Sketches*—the "Characters," the "Tales," and "Our Parish."

\ The succession of pictures as a whole is a grim one. The actual streets and buildings are not by any means as attractive to the eye as those which Hogarth used for his backgrounds. They are a half-century older, blacker by a half-century more of smoke, and weaker from that much more decay. While we look on them we become conscious as never before that London in its age has

slums. A moment's thought tells us that the Alsatia of Milton's day and the Thames Street of Gay's and the Grub Street of Goldsmith's must have been slums; that there must have been sore and festering spots in the city since before history took pains to record them. Horrid inhabitants of these quarters cross Dickens' pages; in contrast to them, all degrees of wealth, virtue, and amiability as well. Had Hogarth been living he would have pictured them best of all. In default of him Cruikshank does almost as well. Here are the fronts of some pawnshops on Monmouth Street—the whole scene teeming with human life. Many grown-ups, but children everywhere—in arms, playing among the filthy garments, sailing boats and fishing in the filthier gutter. A dog in the picture is the most attractive and appropriate detail—the only brute in the composition who is frankly on all fours. Or here's an episode at Seven Dials—two slatterns akimbo berating each other to the delectation of a dozen or fifteen standers and passers-by. This was the London out of which Dickens had struggled and which he hated beyond words, even while he succumbed to its fascination.

Beneath all his invective was the passionate love of his big city which belongs to most metro-



A VIEW OF THE LITTLE SANCTUARY

Under this engraving by J. T. Smith (1808) is the explanation: "This place which was once an asylum for fugitive offenders, is at this time a harbour for wretchedness, filth, and contagion." See *Alsatia*, pp. 52, 53.

politans. One does not look to them for rational judgment. One of them can lose his head over a city as completely as over a woman. He is quite as likely to talk in rash superlatives and rather more so to remain constant in his infatuation. Dickens was not one of the Anglo-Italian school who loved England better, the more they stayed away from it. "Put me down on Waterloo Bridge," he wrote from Genoa, where he was working on *The Chimes*, "at eight o'clock in the evening, with leave to roam about as long as I like, and I would come home, as you know, panting to go on. I am sadly strange as it is, and can't settle."¹

This love of roaming, one is inclined to believe, was the confirmation of a habit started in the two dreary years of the *Murdstone* and *Grinby* period of boyish hard labor. From them on to manhood he satisfied his *Wanderlust* in a fashion comparable to Thoreau's, who said, "I myself have traveled a great deal—in Concord." Apparently he loved best to wander about the old, old City in the district which was thickly populated as far back as Shakespeare's day and earlier. The bulk of his

¹ This is the bridge between Blackfriars and Charing Cross, the north end being near the present Kingsway and the foot of old Drury Lane.

references are to this part of town, which he could easily have reached from Waterloo Bridge when he started on a walk at eight o'clock in the evening. St. Martin's in the Fields just north of Trafalgar Square continually appears in his stories. David Copperfield and Mr. Arthur Clennam both were fond of the Covent Garden region, although David had quarters for a while in the Adelphi, on a side street leading to the Terrace where Garrick lived in his famous days, and Clennam's mother lived in a ramshackle house quite as near the river, and a little farther down stream between St. Paul's and the water front.

The main action of both these stories is in the little strip between Fleet Street and the Strand and the Thames. Oliver Twist, in the darker periods of his career, was living up near Smithfield Market, and continually introduces the reader to familiar streets and scenes in the neighborhood of Smithfield and the Charterhouse, the Old Bailey and St. Paul's—a little district of a comparatively few acres. Again, the immortal Dick Swiveller in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, while he lived in the vicinity of Drury Lane, confined his world to a little district in the immediate neighborhood. His method of securing the necessaries of life embarrassed him greatly, as his failure to

pay bills at different shops closed one street after another.

This dinner today closes Long Acre. I bought a pair of boots in Great Queen Street last week and made that no thoroughfare. There is only one avenue to the Strand left open now and I shall have to stop that up tonight with a pair of gloves. The roads are closing so fast in every direction that in about a month's time . . . I shall have to go from three to four miles out of town to get over the way.¹

And "the way," one should notice, is not toward the open surrounding country, but from his quarters near Drury Lane down into the little strip between the ingenious Richard and the river.

\ It was here in the very thick of things that Dickens' imagination thrived as it harked back to the scenes with which he became desperately familiar during the weary years when he had "the key to the streets." Hungerford Market at Charing Cross was his place of work. His rambles were almost all to the north and east, for the twofold reason that the Marshalsea was naturally reached across Waterloo, Blackfriars, or London bridges, and that the district to the west of the little drudge was too splendid to seem homelike or friendly to him. It lacked also the

¹ *The Old Curiosity Shop*, chap. viii.

variety of the older portion of town. In a neighborhood where the houses had made up their minds to "slide down sideways" and were now leaning on gigantic crutches preliminary to the time when they should abandon these and dive into the river, the replacing of the rottenest old ones by more modern structures varied the scene; but in the west there was the dreariness of uniform prosperity.

The expressionless uniform twenty houses, all to be knocked at and rung at in the same form, all approachable by the same dull steps, all fended off by the same pattern of railing, all with the same impracticable fire-escapes, the same inconvenient fixtures in their heads, and everything without exception to be taken at a high valuation—who has not dined with these?¹

If Dickens occasionally overstates, at least he does not do so in such a description as this of Harley Street. It might apply literally to scores of streets yet standing, which are equally bleak, dreary, and expensive looking. But in this same period when Dickens was still in boyhood there was a great lot of building done in London which was characterized by fine and dignified elegance as well as by stability. Much of this is associated with the name of the Regent, eminently of course

¹ *Little Dorrit*, Book I, chap. xxi.



PART OF WEST SIDE OF REGENT STREET.



PART OF EAST SIDE OF REGENT STREET.

(From old prints)

Regent Street running due north from St. James Park to Piccadilly Circus, and thence in a fine curve up to Oxford Street and beyond to Langley Place. The buildings are four stories high in a classical style, the chief feature of which is the oft-repeated Greek pediment and the ornamental Corinthian columns. To the sophisticated they exhibit "the follies of a Greek architectural mania," but to those who do not know any better they seem graceful and stately and dignified; and they are surely fortunate in not succumbing to the London smoke, on account of the fact that they are Crown property and must be repainted at frequent intervals. Regent Street was a fine achievement of the early nineteenth century, in redeeming a sordid neighborhood by cutting a bold swath through it and making a complete new start in the buildings which lined the avenue. The same sort of thing within the last ten years has been done in the construction of Kingsway, which runs from Holborn directly down to the Strand.

But the fine sweep around Regent's Park,¹ which is bordered with the same architecture, was erected in what was then open country, although at the present time it is a jewel set as

¹ Dickens was a householder in this neighborhood, at 1 Devonshire Terrace, 1839-51.

firmly into the compactly surrounding London neighborhood as Regent Street itself. By Dickens' time the city had become enormous. Hyde Park was encircled with buildings. Regent's, to the northeast of it, was no longer absurdly far from the center of things. Islington and Paddington, a good two miles out from the city on the northwest, had finally been included. Kensington, west of Westminster and beyond Hyde Park, was developing fast. Of course tremendous expansion was going on and is still going on, the surroundings of London today being as fresh and incomplete and varnishy as can be found around any middle western American city. Yet in Dickens' day the great metropolis had become so vast that its further growth in mere area is only comparatively interesting. As a matter of fact, few visitors to London know anything of the great city which extends miles beyond the limits of that London which *Oliver Twist* knew.

^ No account of Dickens' London is complete that does not include the lawyers and their courts. Over fifty scenes, and some of them many times repeated, are presented of the chambers and the halls of the lawyers. They figure prominently in no less than fifteen of his works. If Dickens were to be taken as the sole and final judge, one

would feel that little progress in legal practices had been made since the days of Langland and Chaucer. Of all the grievous subjects in Dickens' pages, none is so grievous to him as this. He has a constitutional aversion to the ways of the profession. Gray's Inn he describes as "that stronghold of melancholy . . . one of the most depressing institutions in brick and mortar known to the children of men."¹ It is no worse than the rest, however. Clement's Inn is almost redeemed by a fanciful tradition, if one could only believe it. "But what populace will waste fancy on such a place, or on New Inn, Staple Inn, Barnard's Inn, or any of the shabby crew?"² Dickens could find no fitter time to introduce us to the courts of Chancery than in "implacable November weather," and even there "the raw afternoon is rawest, and the dense fog is densest, and the muddy streets are muddiest [where] at the very heart of the fog sits the Lord High Chancellor,"³ Even the chambers of the lawyers are equally benighted. A solicitor in Gray's Inn "occupies a highly suicidal set." Mr. Tulkinghorn returns like a dingy London bird smoke-dried and faded to Lincoln's Inn Fields. Mr. Wholes is quartered

¹ *The Uncommercial Traveller*, chap. xiv.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Bleak House*, chap. i.

in a "dingy hatchment," "a little, pale, wall-eyed, woe-begone inn." As for what goes on in these precincts, if we were to take Dickens' word, nothing was apparently gained except the fees of the lawyers, and in this view he stands in uncharitable agreement with Chaucer, Langland, and Lydgate.¹

Throughout literature all along the centuries a second indictment has been drawn that the bar in England was a shelter, not only for men who were too clever, but for others who were not clever at all—amiable young gentlemen, who under cloak of pursuit of the law, indulged in lives of harmless but useless frivolity. Such was Edward Kno'well² in the early seventeenth century, Addison's nameless member of the Inner Temple³ in the early eighteenth century, and so on down the line to Richard Feverel's graceless friend, Ripton Thompson⁴ in mid-Victorian days.

Dickens' own life, in contrast to his stories, may be described as a brilliant succession of more or less formal dinners. Though no man ever reveled more in feast of reason and flow of

¹ See the account of Doctors' Commons, *David Copperfield*, chap. xxiii.

² Ben Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour*.

³ See *Spectator*, Nos. 2 ff.

⁴ Meredith, *Richard Feverel*.

soul, he was by no means above the enjoyment of meat and drink. He writes to Forster:

\You don't feel disposed, do you, to muffle yourself up and start off with me for a good, brisk walk over Hampstead Heath? I knows a good 'ouse where we can have a red-hot chop for dinner and a glass of good wine¹—

the house, still standing, being the far-famed Jack Straw's Castle. This was a modest meal. A better measure of his real capacity was a breakfast he once had when he was looking up data for Mr. Squeers. "We have had for breakfast," he writes, "toast, cakes, a Yorkshire pie, a piece of beef about the size and much the shape of my portmanteau, tea, coffee, ham, and eggs."² Nor was Dickens above the joys of the cheerful glass. One of his social accomplishments was the making of a famous gin-punch, which his friends describe him as mixing with the manner "of a comic conjurer, with a little of the pride of one who had made a great discovery for the benefit of" mankind. One hardly needs to point to the fact that his English generation drank more freely than does ours in America. Here is the way George Sala puts it:

The King of Prussia drinks champagne,
Old Porson drank whate'er was handy

¹ Quoted in W. T. Shore, *Charles Dickens and His Friends*, p. 29.

² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

Maginn drank gin, Judge Blackstone port,
 And many wits drink brandy.
 Stern William Romer drinketh beer,
 And so does Tennyson the rhymer;
 But I'll renounce all liquors for
 My Caviar and Rüdeshheimer.¹

Sargeant Talfourd, friend of all the eminent of his day and no mean writer himself, was always elevated after dinner. Wilkie Collins was merely amusing to his friends, when on coming to a christening party after an excellent dinner, he gazed at the child in its mother's arms, steadied himself, looked solemnly at it, and said: "Ah! child's drunk. He's very drunk!"

The happiest of Dickens' dinners were those he enjoyed in company with small groups of friends. The best of them were, perhaps, at John Forster's, in Lincoln's Inn Fields, in the very quarters which he described as occupied by Mr. Tulkinghorn, Barrister. "I am told," he writes to one of his American friends, although no one needed to tell him, "there is a sound in Lincoln's Inn Fields at night, as of men laughing together with a clinking of knives and forks and wine-glasses."² There was a great deal of good

¹ Verses from "Journey due North" in Shore, *Household Words*, p. 178.

² Quoted in Shore, *Dickens and His Friends*, p. 6.

talk, and that kind of informal jollity that well-behaved people can have when they are not on their company manners. Certain of the men had their favorite songs, as for instance John Leach's "King Death," which Dickens once interrupted, saying in the midst of uproarious laughter: "There, that will do; if you go on any longer, you will make me cry." There were even recitations. There was everything legitimate except formality. The best of all these familiar gatherings was the famous one in this same year when he came back from Milan to read his *Christmas Chimes* to a few friends. "Oh Heaven, what a week we will have," he wrote in advance. We have record of two occasions in the week, one when he presided at the Shakespeare Club dinner, and the other a few days later when with Carlyle, Douglas Jerrold, Frederick Dickens, Maclise, and others he read in Forster's rooms his *Christmas Story*, which was then in proof.

\ Dickens enjoyed this kind of occasion most, but he had a rare gift for making artificial after-dinner speaking at least seem like the real thing. No episodes are pleasanter than the various ones where Dickens and Thackeray were present together—the dinner of the Royal Academy where Thackeray told of his first rejected offer to illus-

trate Dickens' stories; a farewell dinner with Dickens in the chair as Thackeray was starting for America; a dinner of the General Theatrical Fund where Thackeray was toastmaster and Dickens full of demonstrative affection for his fellow-novelist. It is not without interest to record what must have pleased the loyal Dickens himself, that the last time he dined out in London, within a fortnight of his death, he was invited as the guest of a noble lord to meet the King of the Belgians and the Prince of Wales.

\ Frequently at the house of Rogers, the banker poet, there was the feast of reason and flow of soul that accompanies good food and drinking. When the novelist left for America, for France, for Italy, when he returned, and when he went again, always there were dinners and always toasts addressed in fulness of heart to the brilliant and beautiful guest of honor. This side of Dickens' life appears little in his stories, the indelible impressions of his boyhood years crowding out almost everything else. Yet occasional resemblances were perhaps too faithful, as in the case of Harold Skimpole to Leigh Hunt, and Lawrence Boythorne to Walter Savage Landor.

\ Dickens' London was of course Thackeray's in the sense that the two authors were exact

contemporaries and enjoyed popularity and fortune there during the same years. As men they were acquainted with the same clubs and theaters, and dined at many of the same tables both public and private. Yet the London of Thackeray's stories was quite the reverse of that in the tales of Dickens—a difference for which the difference in their early careers accounted. For Thackeray was in a modest way a creature of fortune. As a boy he was sent home from India for education, first in the Charterhouse School and then at Trinity College, Cambridge. After leaving the university—prematurely—he spent his time till he was twenty-one partly in Weimar, partly in Paris, and partly in the Devonshire house where his mother now lived. During this period he was making somewhat unsystematic attempts to learn drawing, to which he had a natural leaning but no particular desire to apply himself. This desire was decreased when on becoming of age he received an inheritance which would have brought him in an income of five hundred pounds if he had not made away with the whole amount in two years.

\ Thus it was that when Dickens was already triumphant over this youthful obstacles, Thackeray was regaling himself with the combined

memories of wasted opportunities and a squandered fortune; but he was not ill-trained for the work he had to do. He had been moving about in a definite realm of society, among the people of wealth, of rank, and of at least the chance for culture. He had known them in town and at their country seats, he had seen them as they traveled on the Continent. He knew, in memory at least, something of their lives in the distant colonial possessions and of how they spent at home the money which had been earned for them in the far corners of the earth. Hence *Pendennis* and *The Newcomes* and *Vanity Fair*; and the *Sketches and Travels in London*, which stand in the same relation to his novels as do the already noted *Sketches by Boz* to Dickens' longer works. Mr. Brown writes a dozen letters to his nephew who has chambers in the Inner Temple and is mildly pursuing the study of the law. Mr. Brown advises him to curb his inclination for jewelry and elaborate dress, to cultivate the society of "lovely woman," to be amicable at his club and genial at the formal assemblies. There are four sketches about dinners of various sorts, all of them more or less expensive, and scores of allusions to theater and opera. The man who wrote these is not selfish nor unsympathetic, as he proves in

“Waiting at the Station” and “Going to See a Man Hanged”; but they are the observations of a man whose haunts are in the West End. These two papers are the results of his “travels” in London. His sketches are naturally of well-fed and opulent people in surroundings of fastidious nicety.

Thackeray's London started with social position and used Bohemia as a background as naturally as Dickens' started with poverty and resorted to the West End only by way of contrast. Major Arthur Pendennis is introduced “in the full London season . . . at a certain club in Pall Mall of which he was the chief ornament.” It was the height of heroism when, in order to pull his nephew out of a tight place, “he gave up London in May, . . . his afternoons from club to club, his little confidential visits to my ladies, his rides in Rotten Row, his dinners, and his stall at the Opera, . . . his bow from my Lord Duke or my Lord Marquis at the great London entertainments.”¹ Imagine any Dickens character with such a daily program! For relief, Arthur Pendennis the younger, after he had failed at the university, came back to Dick Swiveller's London, lived in the Lamb Court, Inner Temple, frequented the

¹ *Pendennis*, chap. ix; see also all of chap. i.

Back Kitchen at the Fielding's Head in Covent Garden, and consorted with a poor hack writer in the Fleet Prison. But this was diversion. "Elated with the idea of seeing life, Pen went into a hundred queer London haunts."¹ When he returned to his native heath he re-entered the West End drawing-rooms, where

the carpets were so magnificently fluffy that your foot made no more noise on them than your shadow; on their white ground bloomed roses and tulips as big as warming pans; about the room were high chairs and low chairs, bandy-legged chairs, chairs so attenuated that it was a wonder any but a sylph could sit upon them, marqueterie tables covered with marvelous gimcracks, china ornaments of all ages and countries, bronzes, gilt daggers, Books of Beauty, yataghans, Turkish papooshes and boxes of Parisian bonbons. Wherever you sat down there were Dresden shepherds and shepherdesses convenient at your elbow; there were, moreover light blue poodles and ducks and cocks and hens in porcelain . . . there was in a word everything that comfort could desire and the most elegant taste devise. A London drawing-room fitted up without regard to expense is surely one of the noblest and most curious sights of the present day.²

This was quite different from the interior decoration of Elizabeth's time. When Dickens wished to achieve the same variety he had to resort to the Old Curiosity Shop.

¹ *Pendennis*, chap. xxx.

² *Ibid.*, chap. xxxvii.



Preachers Court, Charterhouse.



Great Hall (interior) Charterhouse

CHARTER HOUSE. WITHOUT AND WITHIN
(From photographs)

In Thackeray's own experience the most interesting contact with historic London came through his four years at Charterhouse.¹ It is one of the most interesting monuments in London. As hospital and school it dates from 1611, but at that time it was two hundred and forty years old, for it was originally a Carthusian monastery which suffered confiscation at the dissolution of the monasteries in 1535. Structurally it looks today very much as it has for centuries.

There is an old Hall, a beautiful specimen of the architecture of James's time; an old Hall? many old halls; old staircases, old passages, old chambers decorated with old portraits, walking in the midst of which we walk as it were in the early seventeenth century.

∪ In these surroundings lived the eighty pensioners who enjoyed the bounty of Sir Thomas Sutton, the founder, and here studied the sixty foundation scholars and the hundreds of tuition scholars among whom Thackeray was one. He could look back on illustrious predecessors. Crashaw, the poet, Blackstone of *Commentaries* fame, Addison and Steele together, John Wesley, nonconformist, and archdeacons, bishops, and archbishops of the established church. Today

¹ This appears as Greyfriars in *Pendennis*, chap. ii, and in *The Newcomes*, Vol. I, chaps. iv and vii; Vol. II, chaps. xxxvii and xlii.

the number of pensioners has been reduced and the Charterhouse School, which has removed to Surrey, has been replaced by the Merchant Taylors' School; but the old associations still cluster in and around the old buildings. Smithfield Market is just around the corner, and a few minutes' walk down Aldersgate Street and beyond brings us to St. Paul's Churchyard and the towering dome in the midst of it.

If Charterhouse was such an epitome of life and letters, how much more so was all London. It was still an old city, untouched by the march of comfort. There were no telephones, nor telegraphs, nor railways above or below ground. There were no electric lights, nor motor busses, nor elevators; no department stores nor penny post. In 1814 the *London Times* was first printed by steam, and in 1816 a steamboat first plied on the river. In 1822 St. James's Park was lighted by gas, and in 1836 the Greenwich Railway was opened. Old cities are like old houses. You cannot introduce all the modern conveniences without changing the looks of things. The niche on the stairs, where the old Rogers Group used to be, proves just the place for an electric switchboard; and the fine old knocker on the front door, though it still survives, is a sort of "last leaf in

the spring," for everyone knows that all it does now is to press a button when it comes down. Georgian London is no more; and this is but natural; it is a long way back to the Georges. Thackeray and Dickens were both born more than a hundred years ago.

ILLUSTRATIVE READINGS

As we approach the present day, the abundance of material is so great that the problem of selection is correspondingly increased. In the lists supplied with the eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters, books will be mentioned which have for the most part been useful in the preparation of this volume.

BIOGRAPHY

Forster, John, *Life of Charles Dickens*.

Ritchie, A. J., Biographical introductions to works of William Makepeace Thackeray.

Shore, W. Teignmouth, *Charles Dickens and His Friends*.

Ward, H. S. and C. W. B., *The Real Dickens Land*.

CONTEMPORARY SATIRE AND DESCRIPTION

Carlyle, Thomas, *Model Prisons in Latter Day Pamphlets*.

Dickens, Charles, *Sketches by Boz*.

Egan, Pierce, *Life in London* (2 vols.); *A Finish to the Adventures in and out of London*.

Masson, David, *Memories of London in the 'Forties*.

Thackeray, W. M., *Sketches and Travels in London*.

FICTION

Dickens Charles (novels of special importance only),
Bleak House; *David Copperfield* (much auto-
biography); *Great Expectations*; *Little Dorrit*;
Nicholas Nickleby; *Oliver Twist*; *Old Curiosity
Shop*.

Thackeray, W. M., *The Newcomes*; *Pendennis*;
Vanity Fair.



LONDON.

BLACKFRIARS BRIDGE AND THE RIVER FRONT BEFORE THE VICTORIA EMBANKMENT

(From an old print)

CHAPTER IX

VICTORIAN LONDON

There is no man or group of men of letters whose name can suggest for the latter half of the nineteenth century what the name of the Queen does when applied to her London or her England. Nor is there any monarch in the history of the country whose name suggests so much, unless it be that other Queen who lived about three hundred years before Victoria. The enormous changes—some of them spectacular and some invisible but fundamental—which took place under her reign have been so frequently expounded that they are familiar generalizations to every reader. In religion they include the Oxford Movement¹ toward a re-established orthodoxy in a day when heretical liberalism was hourly spreading; in politics and economics, the series of events leading up to and beyond the Chartist uprising of 1848² and the spread of empire throughout

¹ For a treatment in fiction of the effects of this movement see Anthony Trollope, *Barchester Towers*, with special reference to chaps. vi and xx. Also Charles Kingsley, *Yeast*.

² See Kingsley, *Alton Locke*; George Eliot, *Felix Holt*; and Charles Reade, *Put Yourself in His Place*.

the century; in science and invention all that is involved in the initial developments in the conquest of time and space, and all that was bound to follow the revolutionizing discoveries in the natural sciences.¹ The great strides taken in popular education were natural consequences of these other steps in social evolution; and the literature of these generations became the living index of what was going on.

These advances in human progress are all of them so recent that the period seems infinitely complex. Evidently no man, or pair, or group of writers may be selected as universally representative, nor did any human experience touch all phases of Victorian London or England. So by way of a frank makeshift adjective, one uses the name of a gentle lady who, as a quietly contemplative onlooker, witnessed the march of events with which she was in general sympathy, although she was comparatively powerless either to retard or encourage. What the world has agreed to mean by her name is something which is gone.

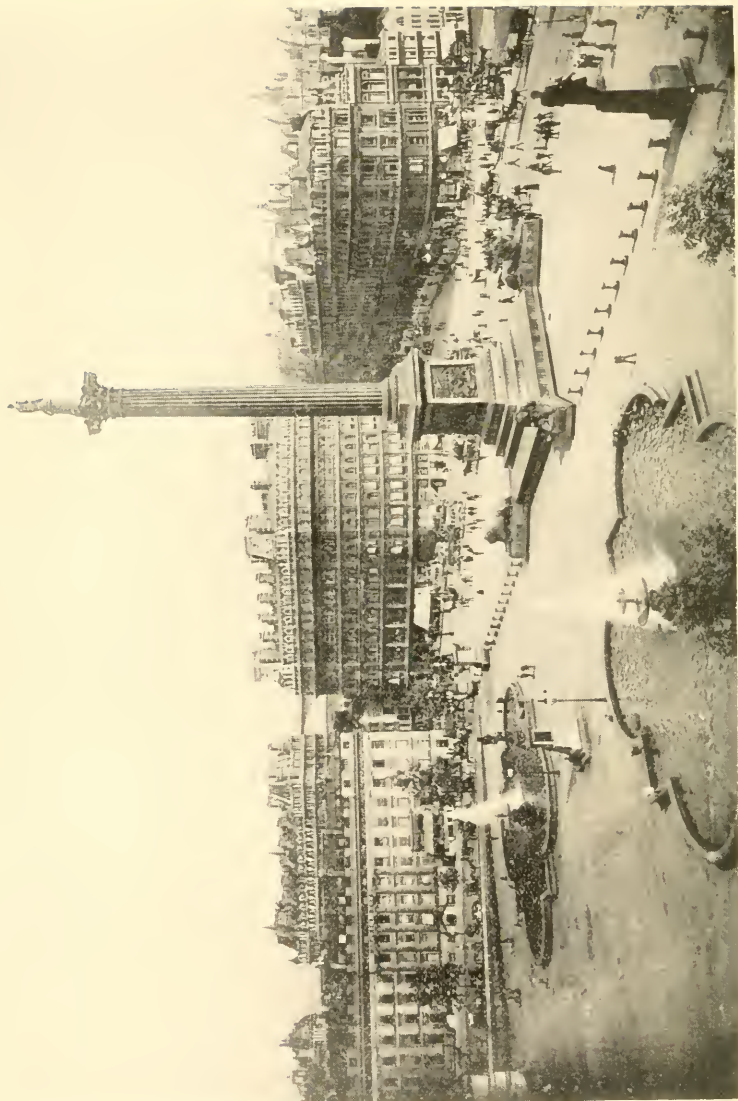
Thus—to illustrate by a reference to the novelists—with more than a generation of added ex-

¹ For the attitude toward new developments in the medical world, for instance, see George Eliot, *Middlemarch*, Book V.

perience since Dickens' death, we are all of us conjuring with generalizations for which he was by no means prepared. We take up Mr. Herbert G. Wells and share his excitement over the social order of things. We feel that he is very eloquent and that what he says is very familiar. We turn to Mr. Bennett and Mr. Galsworthy to discover that these truths are so familiar to them as to fill them with a sad world-weariness. We feel subtly flattered at not having explained to us the conclusions which Mr. Wells is eagerly administering. These others begin where he leaves off. Then we turn to Mr. William de Morgan to find that he is still muddling with the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill. We enjoy seeing him at it. We admire much that is in him, and then we say somewhat complacently, "Victorian." So "Victorian" is used as a synonym for old-fashioned. It suggests an attitude of wonder at the fact that the old order is giving place to new, and it makes this wonder resolve itself now into applause and now into dismay. It makes this past generation timidly accept as conclusions ideas which the twentieth century regards as hoary with age. And in the London of Victoria it offers evidence of all this in the life of the people and in the monuments which they erected to themselves.

As one stands in Trafalgar Square at the foot of the Nelson Monument and faces toward the southwest, he is standing as it were at the junction of the three members of a gigantic wishbone. Behind him, at the apex of the whole thing is the church of St. Martin's in the Fields, just across the street from the National Gallery. In front of him is the magnificent arch and colonnade which mark the entrance to the Mall which runs by St. James's Park to Buckingham Palace. A little to the left Whitehall leads among the imposing government buildings down toward the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey—imperial London equipped for work and ready to transact business with the world. A little to the right one can see through to Pall Mall flanked with imposing clubhouses—social London arrayed in its best and prepared to enjoy itself in the seclusion of barricaded gentility. And at the meeting-point of the two avenues this square which is overlooked by the statue of a king and the monument of a conqueror is over and over again the meeting-place of democratic English assembled to protest at the established order of things.

Although for many generations, particularly from Addison's time onward, the club has been an important feature in the daily life of the Lon-



← National Gallery

West end of The Strand

Nelson Monument

Whitehall →

TRAFALGAR SQUARE

(From a photograph)

doner, it was not till well into the nineteenth century that modern clubdom came into full flower. The Pall Mall of the present, that solemn array of fine houses in which the English gentleman goes through the solemn ceremony of enjoying himself, was largely built up during the life of Victoria, if not during her reign. The Marlborough (on the site of the original Almack's), the Army and Navy, and the Junior Carlton; and across the way the Oxford and Cambridge clubs, both Old and New, the Junior Naval and Military, the Guards, the Carlton, the Reform, the Travellers, the Athenaeum, and the United Service, formidably parade English male respectability in its most awful aspects. Other clubs by scores and dozens, and many of them most exclusive, are scattered all about town. United they stand here, however, as in no other quarter.

No alien knows much about them, for few aliens ever cross their thresholds, and when they do it is to be continually reminded that they are not "visitors," but "strangers." It may therefore be unfair to quote even an Englishman's comment on an imaginary organization known as "The Stoics."¹

¹ See Galsworthy, *The Country House*, I, x; III, vi.

It was getting on for the Stoics' dinner hour, and, Stoic after Stoic, they were getting out of cabs and passing the club doors. The poor fellows had been working hard all day on the race course, the cricket ground, at Hurlingham, or in the Park; some had been to the Royal Academy, and on their faces was a pleasant look: "Ah, God is good—we can rest at last!" . . . From a little back slum there had come out two seamstresses to take the air. They stood on the pavement watching the cabs drive up. Some of the Stoics saw them and thought, "Poor girls: they look awfully bad." Three or four said to themselves: "It oughtn't to be allowed. I mean, it's so painful to see; and it's not as if one could do anything. They're not beggars, don't you know, and so what *can* one do?" But most of the Stoics did not look at them at all, feeling that their soft hearts could not stand these painful sights, and anxious not to spoil their dinners.

This is perhaps not altogether generous. It would surely be unfair if it were applied to all the members of all the clubs. Yet on the whole the evidence seems to show that, though it is only a few steps from the Nelson Monument to the nearest of the clubhouses, the distance from protesting democracy in the Square to the complacent clubman in Pall Mall is almost too great to be measured.

But the distance from Pall Mall to Whitehall is much easier to traverse. The clubman can cut down by Waterloo Place to Green Park, stroll

across the Mall and Horse Guards Parade, and through Downing Street past No. 10, the Prime Minister's residence, into Whitehall, flanked with the great citadels of the bureaucracy. In vulgar feet and inches it seems much farther than to the Square; but in subtle reality it is infinitely nearer. For the man of many possessions who makes this little excursion finds himself in perfect sympathy with the Whitehall surroundings. His own estate is reduplicated here in the large. This is where England quarters the chief stewards and head bailiffs who watch over her holdings in Asia and Africa and America. There are many great buildings on either side the way. Like much of the rest of London this neighborhood furnishes a record in stone of history from James I to George V. The Banqueting House is the oldest monument, rich in its history as a royal palace.

Henry [VIII] dies at Whitehall. It seems the favorite palace of the Stuarts; James and Charles I both plan sumptuous palaces on its site. Then one bitter January day Charles walks out of one of the windows of the Banqueting House to meet his doom. Cromwell reigns and dies there. The place one would think would be too full of horror and tragedy for Charles II to live there, but there he spends his careless hours, unequally divided between political craft and reckless voluptuousness. Three years later a boat puts out from the Terrace and takes away

the last Stuart King. The dynasty floats away in that wherry into space. Then there arrives a Dutch prince with an asthma which forbids him to live so near the river, the palace is deserted, and soon afterwards burned down by another native of Holland, a laundress drying linen in her room. A casual ailment disestablishes the ancient palace. And so the glory passes from Whitehall and it dwindles into a realm of red tape.¹

The new War Office is a twentieth-century structure. Halfway between the Tudors and the present day is the Horse Guards. To the man of sentiment the relics of the past may be most interesting; but to the sightseer who likes bigness, the three most imposing buildings are this War Office, the Admiralty, and the Government Offices—Foreign, Colonial, India, and Home. These great piles with their enormous staff of officials, big and little, are in a way the logical outcome of the South Sea and East India houses. They are maintained as a part of the system which created Colonel Newcome, and they protect the commerce in which Mr. Merdle may have made his spectacular investments.

By the middle of the century it was the polite and established custom to recognize two points concerning them: first, that they had to be man-

¹Address by the Earl of Rosebery. *London Topographical Record*, VI, 24-25.

aged somehow, and second, that they were managed all wrong. Carlyle's comments, for instance,¹ are quite his own even though they are almost commonplace expressions of mid-century discontent.

Every colony, every agent for a matter colonial, has his tragic tale to tell you of his sad experiences in the Colonial Office. . . . What the Colonial Office, inhabiting the head of Downing Street, really *was* and had to do, or try doing, in God's practical Earth, he could not by any means precisely get to know; believes that it doesn't itself in the least precisely know. . . . Believes that nobody knows—that it is a mystery, a kind of heathen myth—and stranger than any piece of the old mythological Pantheon; for *it* practically presides over the destinies of many millions of livingmen!

With the Foreign Office, affairs seemed to be in a rather worse way; in the Home Office they seemed, to Carlyle, most hopeless of all.

One satisfaction was freely open to the army of Government Office dignitaries as they were held up to scorn by essayists and novelists, and this was that they fared no worse than did Parliament and the Ministry. "Who shall be Premier, and take in hand the 'rudder of government,' otherwise called the 'spigot of taxation'; shall it be

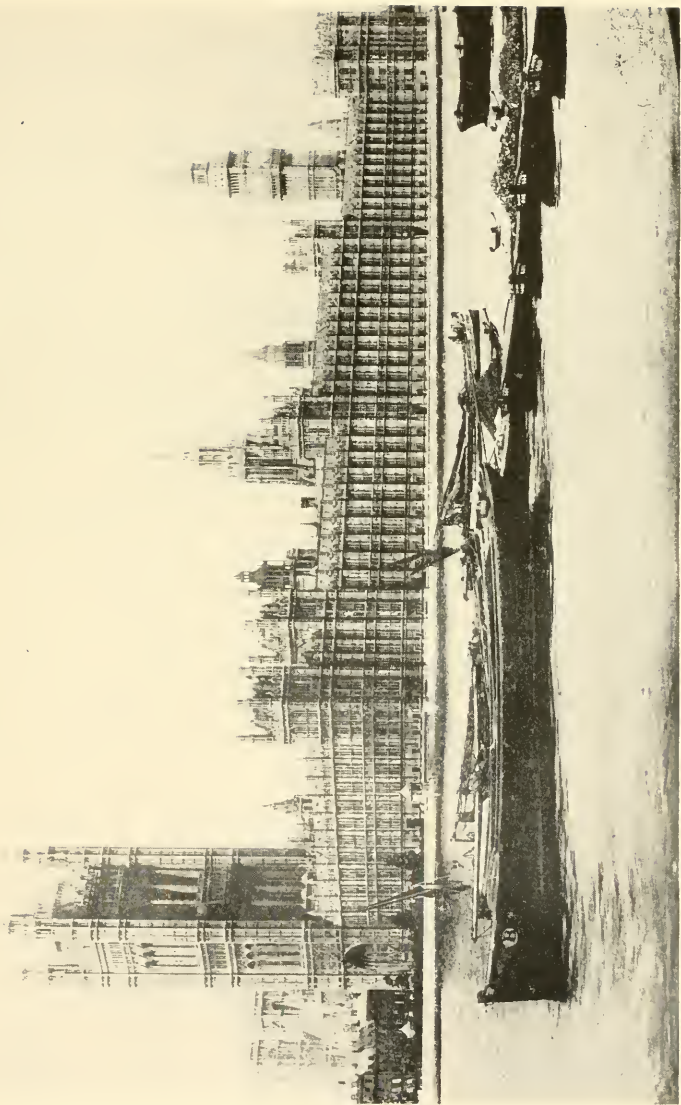
¹ See in Carlyle's *Latter Day Pamphlets*, 1850, the essays on "Downing Street" and "New Downing Street."

the Honourable Felix Parvulus, or the Right Honourable Felicissimus Zero?" Perhaps the most famous bit of irony is Dickens'.¹

I am joined with eleven others in reporting the debates in Parliament for a Morning Newspaper. Night after night I record predictions that never come to pass, professions that are never fulfilled, explanations that are meant only to mystify. I wallow in words; Britannia, that unfortunate female, is always before me, like a trussed fowl: skewered through and through with office pens, and bound hand and foot with red tape. I am sufficiently behind the scenes to know the worth of political life. I am quite an infidel about it, and shall never be converted.

Among the many satisfactions granted to the "M.P.'s" of then and now, not the least must have been the satisfaction of being adequately housed. The vast Gothic collection of courts and halls and offices, known as the Houses of Parliament, eight acres of them, is impressive in beauty as well as in size. The advantage of its site on the river, and the dignity of its neighbors, the greatest of which are Westminster Abbey and Westminster Hall, both contribute to its own dignity. Whatever historian or traveler may have thought about British government in general or

¹ See *David Copperfield*, 1852, the opening paragraphs of chap. xliii.



NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT
(From a photograph)

in particular, this seat of legislature at the home of British Government is worth going a long way to see. The fine enterprise necessary to carrying through such great public works was not lacking throughout the century. There is no better evidence to be found than in this undertaking or in the great Victoria Embankment which runs east from here for a mile and a third along the north bank of the river. It was a big engineering project. Thirty-seven acres were reclaimed for it from the river. The fine boulevard stretches in a royal curve from Westminster to Blackfriars. It cost millions, and it was worth millions; but in a way this very achievement, accomplished at a time when the skies were brightening, throws light on the complaint of the critics at what was all along the inclination of the government, to adopt some fine measures and many futile ones to the neglect of the most important of all.

Canada question, Irish appropriation question, West India question, Queen's Bedchamber question; Game Laws, Usury Laws; African Blacks, Hill Coolies, Smithfield cattle, and Dog-carts,—all manner of questions and subjects, except simply this the alpha and omega of all! Surely Honourable Members ought to speak of the Condition-of-England question too.¹

¹ See Carlyle, *Chartism*, chap. i, paragraph 5.

Since the days of the Reform Laws, when the mob had held Parliament in siege and had stormed the Duke of Wellington in Apsley House, Piccadilly, the discontent of the people had by no means waned, even though seventeen years had passed. Throughout the early months of 1848 the bitter discontent of the working classes was becoming steadily more rancorous. When the revolution broke out on the Continent in February the situation was doubly aggravated. At home and abroad the lower classes were hoping for political freedom, and feeling that somehow or other if it could be achieved most of their troubles would be brought to an end. Riots followed in the big cities all over the kingdom, and when in April a particularly offensive piece of legislation, "the Gagging Act," was passed, London had to be filled with troops and the Duke of Wellington to be once more put in command. The public buildings were garrisoned and barricaded, and though the threatened uprising was more or less of a fiasco, to which a half-comic touch was lent by the depressing effect of a drenching rain, the passing of the crisis afforded the old hero and the Home Secretary a relief which was almost beyond words. Two months later there was another scare, but, in spite of

all, Parliament justified Kingsley in quoting at them:

There they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
.....
But they smile, they find a music, centred in a doleful song,
Steaming up, a lamentation, and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong,
Chanted by an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing little yearly dues of wheat, and wine, and oil;
Till they perish, and they suffer—some, 'tis whispèred,
 down in hell
Suffer endless anguish!

Such agitations could not continue indefinitely without producing results. Public sentiment was so deep and widespread and public spokesmen were so gifted that legislation, backed by public opinion, brought about a succession of happy changes. When Dickens and Thackeray, Charles Kingsley and Charles Reade, Ruskin and Morris were but a few of the men who were preaching the gospel of discontent, the voice of the people was bound to gain a hearing.

\\ In the meanwhile certain fine national projects in the fields of art and of science were being quietly perfected. The National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, built between 1832 and 1838 and since then three times considerably enlarged, though

it started from small beginnings which moved John Ruskin to ridicule, finally developed so that even he admitted its contents to be "the most important collection of paintings in Europe for the purposes of the general student." Hardly less notable—no less so in the aggregate—are the two great collections presented to the people by individual donors, the Wallace, on Manchester Square, and the Tate, on the Thames below Westminster Abbey. The life of London University is again, from establishment to re-establishment, almost exactly coincident with Queen Victoria's reign. From 1836 to 1900 this institution was a simple examining board giving degrees first to candidates from a limited set of colleges, then to men students wherever educated, and finally to women students. But it was reorganized to include about twenty-five existing "Schools" in eight faculties and is now an active institution of great scope. Eminent above any of these is, of course, the British Museum, which goes back to the year 1700 for its origin, but which has taken its greatest strides during the last half-century. The present building was started in 1823; the vast domed reading-room was completed in 1857; additions are still being made and there is little sign of their ever coming

to a total stop. It is a wonderful storehouse. The collections of a hundred kinds, some of them complete gifts, and others ever increasing, are more than any one mind can grasp. The great library, which grows at the rate of about a thousand books a week, is a marvel of completeness. Londoners as a rule treat the Museum with respectful neglect, seldom raising the echoes in its resounding corridors; but all the rest of the world swarms through them.

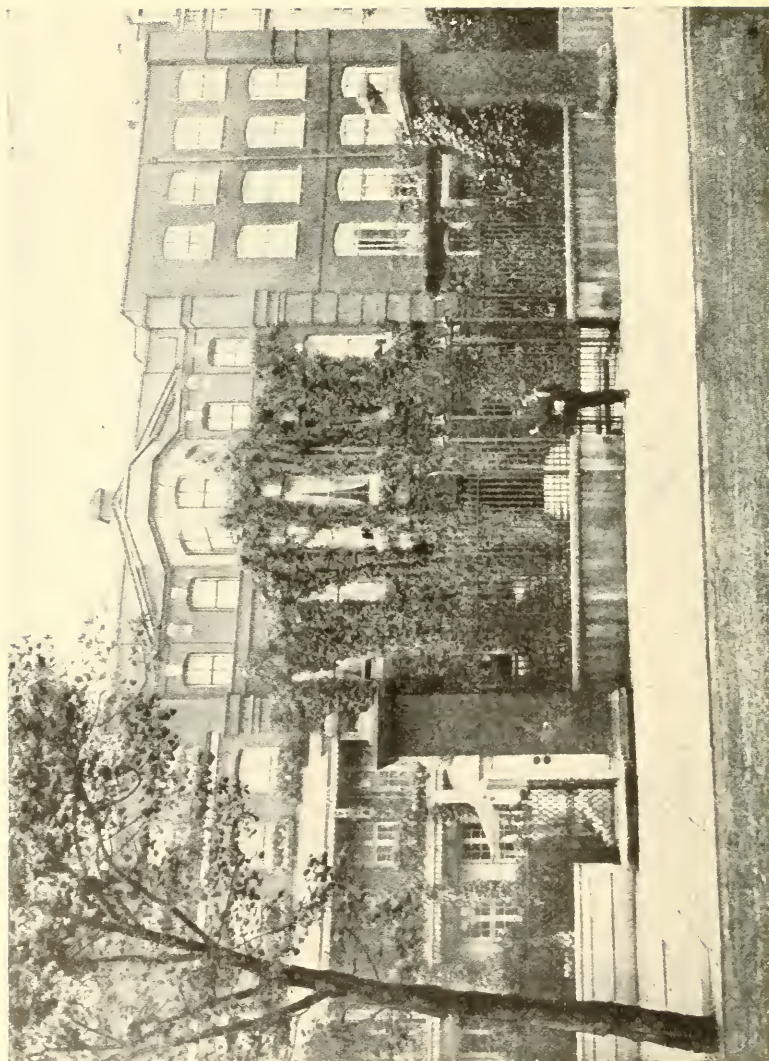
It remains to mention literary London—no easy task, for the men of letters were scattered over the entire metropolis. To attempt to mention all of them in their relation to the big city would be to degenerate into guidebookishness. Hither and yon they lived and worked, circulating in and out of town with universal restlessness. The literary public, as a book-reading and book-purchasing multitude, had so far multiplied, that eminence in authorship usually brought with it at least freedom from money worries. Perhaps one reason for the kaleidoscopic movings of the author folk was that the best known of them were able to progress from economy to comfort and from comfort to luxury. For the most part the old City saw little of them. All along the neighborhoods of Holborn and Oxford Street from

Bloomsbury to Hyde Park tablets record their temporary indwellings. One outlying suburb is worth especial remark.

The borough in all London which became prominent as a colony of writers and artists toward the middle of the century was Chelsea. This was a little district almost exactly equal in territory to the old City, and somewhat more than three miles southwest of Charing Cross by road, or over four by river. From here Carlyle wrote to his wife when he engaged a house in 1834:

We lie safe at a bend of the river, away from all the great roads, have air and quiet hardly inferior to Craigenputtock, an outlook from the back windows into more leafy regions, with here and there a red high-peaked roof looking through, and see nothing of London except by day the summits of St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, and by night the gleam of the great Babylon, affronting the peaceful skies.

The emotions of the recently successful house-hunter with reference to his find are likely to be unreliable. He searches to the point of exhaustion and then, to justify his desperate choice, he is bound to describe the place in the language of a real estate auctioneer. The Carlyles lived at 5 Cheyne Row for forty-seven years, but the quiet, "hardly inferior to Craigenputtock," later became such a myth that the "sage of Chelsea"



WHERE ROSSETTI LIVED
Queen's House, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea
(From a photograph)

verged on extravagance in his attempts to build himself a sound-proof study lighted from above, and in spite of his investment was annoyed by the roar of the great city, which his extra doors and partitions could muffle but could not shut out.

The accumulated habit of years in the country made a discord out of the same sounds which rang like music in the ears of citified Leigh Hunt when he retired to Chelsea:

I got to like the very cries in the street, for making me the more aware of it by the contrast. I fancied they were unlike the cries in other quarters of the suburbs, and that they retained something of the old quaintness and melodiousness which procured them the reputation of having been composed by Purcell and others. Nor is this unlikely when it is considered how fond those masters were of sporting with their art, and setting the most trivial words to music in their glees and catches. The primitive cries of cowslips, primroses, and hot cross-buns seemed never to have quitted this sequestered region. They were like daisies in a bit of surviving field. There was an old seller of fish, in particular, whose cry of "Shrimps as large as prawns!" was such a regular, long-drawn, and truly pleasing melody, that in spite of his hoarse, and I am afraid drunken voice, I used to wish for it of an evening, and hail it when it came. It lasted for some years; then faded, and went out; I suppose with the poor old weather-beaten fellow's existence.¹

¹ Leigh Hunt, *Autobiography*, chap. xxiv.

From time to time Carlyle, with due reluctance, went up to town; more and more frequently, as the years went on, the mountain came to Mahomet. One of the most picturesque of these visits was from Count d'Orsay in 1839:

About a fortnight ago, this Phoebus Apollo of dandyism came whirling hither in a chariot that struck all Chelsea into mute amazement with its splendour. Chorley's under jaw went like the hopper or under riddle of a pair of fanners, such was his terror on bringing such a splendour into actual contact with such a grimness. Nevertheless, we did amazingly well, the Count and I. . . . Jane laughed for two days at the contrast of my plaid dressing gown, bilious, iron countenance, and this Paphian apparition.¹

Cheyne Row and Cheyne Walk form together a short continuous street, fronting on the Chelsea Embankment to the Thames and facing Battersea Park across the river. The double view of wood and water attracted other congenial spirits to the neighborhood. The most famous landmark on the Walk was Queen's House at No. 16, of which Dante Gabriel Rossetti was tenant during the last twenty years of his own life and the last nineteen of Carlyle's. It is associated, rather ingeniously, with traditions of Henry VIII, though probably built by Wren more than a

¹ Letter to Dr. John Carlyle, April 16, 1839.

hundred years too late to have housed either of his Catherines. Swinburne and William Michael Rossetti lived for a time here with Dante Gabriel, and George Meredith engaged a room which he never occupied. To No. 4 George Eliot came late in her career, occupying it for the few weeks before her death. Holman Hunt, recently buried in St. Paul's where his most famous picture, "The Light of the World," was hung, had a studio in Cheyne Walk. Near the western end J. M. W. Turner spent his last days, and only a few streets away James MacNeill Whistler had a studio for many years. There must have been abundant ozone in the Chelsea atmosphere.

\ Not in Chelsea alone. There was a stimulating something in the atmosphere of all London throughout the period. Seldom has there been deeper breathing, heartier joking, more uproarious laughter, or sterner invective. The general discontent that prevailed in Victorian London belonged to the spirit of the age, which was an age of transition. If the early century was troubled, as it surely was, it was by "the cheerful trouble of change." And if the adjustments which were incessantly taking place made more for chaos than order, it was because "the creed of humanity was on its honeymoon."

Yet the working-out of new problems in the midst of the old City is recorded again and again in Victorian fiction. *Alton Locke* and *Felix Holt* are logical predecessors of *Robert Elsmere* and *Marcella* and *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*. They are alike in their serious hopefulness. If they, and all their kind, had not this note in common, the sober lovers of London could not have been breaking out every now and then into exclamations of boyish fun. Here, for instance, was Richard Jefferies, by no means a frivolous soul. As a nature lover he recognized the forces of evolution at work in the unhappy invasion of the countryside by the big town. Yet he was stirred by the "presence of man in his myriads"; he was attracted as by a lodestone, often to go "to London without any object whatever, but just because I must, and, arriving there, wander withersoever the hurrying throng carries me." As his moods varied, London was poetry and music to him, or philanthropy, or merely the source of comfortable amiability. Here is the old song, the song of the London streets, familiar through the centuries, and recognizable still though set to a new melody and to a new key:

How delicious now to walk down Regent Street,
along Piccadilly, up Bond Street, and so on, in a widening

circle, with a thousand pounds in one's pocket, just to spend, all your own, and no need to worry. . . . To take a lady—the lady—to St. Peter Robinson's, and spread the silks of the earth before her feet, and see the awakening delight in her eyes and the glow on her cheek; to buy a pony for the "kids," and a diamond brooch for the kind middle-aged matron who befriended you years since in time of financial need. . . . Could Xerxes, could great Pompey, could Caesar with all his legions, could Lucullus with all his oysters, have ever enjoyed such pleasure as this—just to spend money freely, with a jolly chuckle, in the streets of London? . . . No joy like waste in London streets—happy waste, imaginative extravagance; to and fro like a butterfly!¹

The last quarter of the century brought with it more of reposeful sophistication, and as the excitement died down the great men who died with it were not at once replaced. Now as the student of affairs looks about him it becomes apparent that the London life of the four Georges has gone and a new literature is springing up to reflect the London of George the Fifth. "South Africa" is already becoming a tradition; Victoria's successor has passed away.

ILLUSTRATIVE READINGS

BIOGRAPHY

Cross, J. W., *Life of George Eliot*.

Harrison, Frederic, *Autobiographical Memories*.

¹ Richard Jefferies, *Amaryllis at the Fair*, 1887.

Mackail, J. W., *Life of William Morris*.

Martineau, Harriet, *Autobiography*.

CONTEMPORARY SATIRE AND DESCRIPTION

The selection of material under this head is extremely difficult. A complete reading of the greatest essayists of the period will yield material all along the way. In Carlyle's *Latter Day Pamphlets* and his essay on *Chartism*, for instance, there is much illuminating material. So also in Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*; in much of Ruskin, and in Morris' comments on the times, and, by way of contrast, in certain of his prose romances. But the list of possibilities is too long to be undertaken.

DRAMA

As in connection with chap. viii, the available resources have been few. It would include such plays as *Milestones* by Arnold Bennett; *Widowers' Houses* by Bernard Shaw; *Disraeli* by Louis Parker, and the contemporary play *Society* by T. W. Robertson (1865).

FICTION

Besant, Walter, and Rice, James, *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*.

James, Henry, *A London Life*; *The Siege of London*; *Tales of Three Cities*.

Kingsley, Charles, *Alton Locke*; *Yeast*.

Reade, Charles, *Put Yourself in His Place*.

Trollope, Anthony, *Barchester Towers*, chaps. vi, xx; *The Prime Minister*; *The Way We Live Now*.

Ward, Mrs. Humphrey, *Marcella*; *Robert Elsmere*.

CHAPTER X

CONTEMPORARY LONDON

To even the amateur student of London tradition the great city of the present is like an old parchment which has been written on and erased, re-covered with script and re-erased, until what exists today shows beneath the latest superficial transcript microscopic traces of all the romantic stories written on it since the hour when it first lay immaculate beneath the pen of the mediaeval cleric. The very lay of the land shows how much of a palimpsest London is. The dust of the centuries has drifted round it, gradually raising the ground level so that the records of the past are packed in layers beneath the pavements of today. These strata are dear to the heart of the archaeologist—the ashes from the fire of 1666, the relics of the days between Shakespeare and Chaucer, the traces of mediaeval life, and finally the signs of Norman, Anglo-Saxon, and even Roman London.

It is from fifteen to thirty feet from top to bottom of this artificial heap, and through it the builder of every modern bank or business block

must grub to get to his foundations. There is, of course, something prosaic to the average romance-fed mind in digging a hole in which to plant an up-to-date hotel. Fancy would rather dwell on sand-buried cities in the oriental desert than on London caked in under the grime of its own débris. Yet now and then an adventurer turns up who would as soon glean along after the Underground engineers as fit out an expedition for Egypt. Such a one was the late James Smith of Whitechapel, by business a dealer in bones and scrap iron, and by avocation the greatest collector of recent years. Antiquities were the exciting by-product of his trade. Now and then, moreover, students of the past feel an especial interest over the evidence of ancient life in the midst of life still going on; and herein lies a pre-eminent charm of present-day London. This charm is not to be accounted for in the mere accumulation of monuments and relics. The collections are only incidental symbols of the recollections. The fixed traditions in London social life are much more interesting than the strata in the "made" earth. London theology is quite as absorbing as the church architecture. And the attitude of the whole community toward the vague and yet rather definite subject of Things



LONDON WALL.

In the Church Yard of St. Giles's, Cripplegate.

As now standing this part of LONDON WALL, and from its very unimpaired situation, has been preserved, this is the most perfect part we have left, the height from the ground to the top of the Bastlement is ten feet.

LONDON WALL was first built about the year Three Hundred and Six, burn by the Danes Eight Hundred and Thirty Nine. Was by Alfred King of the ten Saxons in Eight hundred and Eighty Six repaired. In the seventeenth of Edward the fourth Ralph Jordane Mayor 1477 caused part of the wall about the City to be repaired between Aldgate and Aldersgate, Aldersgate and Cripplegate. see Steyer Stew p 10. & Pennants London p 7

Engraved May 10. 1792 by N. Smith, 279 B G. Maps Buildings, St. Martins Lane.

in General is, like the literature of the present, full of reminders of all that London has experienced in the course of the last several centuries.

Not that the substantial memorials in stone and mortar are without interest, for many of them are infinitely suggestive. Most extensive is the old Wall. Streets which used to lead to and through the old gates still bear their names, and a street called London Wall follows the reach at the back of the City from Cripplegate to beyond Moorgate. In a narrow strip thereon between the sidewalk and St. Alphage's Church is a sturdy fragment of the old fortification which is easily recognizable if one is on the hunt for it. The other most famous surviving bit is in the corner of another churchyard, that of St. Giles Cripplegate. All around it are modern business buildings. The yard is ingeniously hidden among them, but the sight is worth a patient search; for the consecrated ground, hemmed in as it is, and rudely violated by an asphalt, iron-railed passage way, is a beautiful garden spot, in one corner of which the high-battlemented mole looks much as it may have a thousand years ago.

More recent, for it dates back only to 1078, is the Tower. This castle, palace, prison, is the most conspicuous landmark of London east of

St. Paul's. By Chaucer's time the general aspect of the building group was comparable to what it is today. Its history was particularly rich in incident during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries from Henry VIII to Charles II. Now it is an arsenal and a museum, the repository for the royal jewels and the residence of a large number of dependents on the Crown. It is not hard to step out of the present when one enters its ominous gateway. The dull voice of the city might be the roar of the tide-driven Thames passing between the starlings of old London Bridge. As one moves from point to point, among the different cells and across the execution ground, one gets an idea of the slightness of human life in the old days when it could be confined or snuffed out by the arbitrary command of king, bishop, or minister. The Tower is the incarnate strength of past ages. The thought of attacking it with such weapons as the past ages could afford is a clear absurdity. Strangely enough, though it is a puny thing compared to Gibraltar, the Tower gives one a feeling of greater security than that mountainous fortress. For it measures up with the strength of an epoch when stone walls could "a prison make, and iron bars a cage"; but Gibraltar might conceivably crumble at the

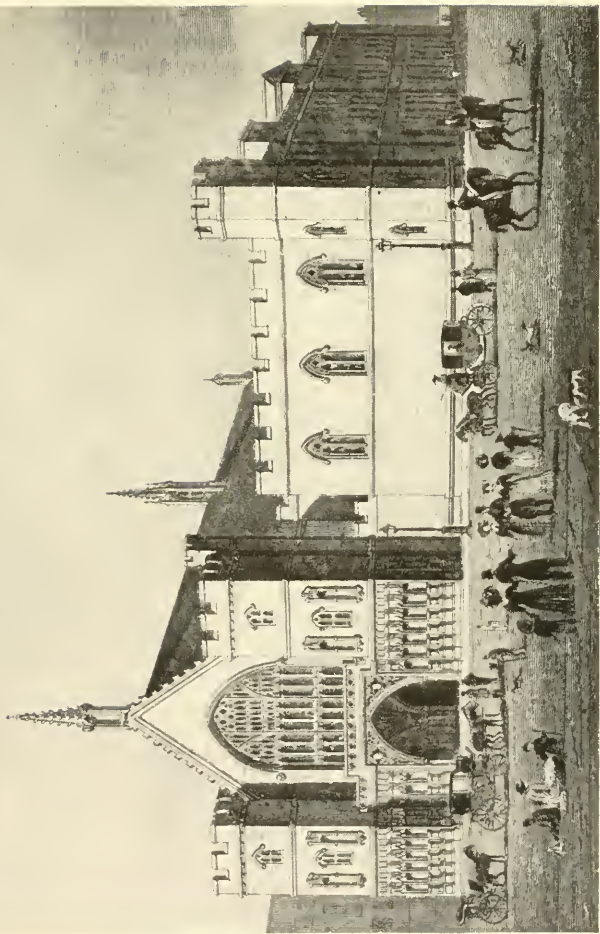
assault from above and below of artillery and explosives of the sort that modern governments are running mad over.

Two miles up the river on the other side of old London, a substantial old building, sightly in itself, is over-shadowed by the present Houses of Parliament. Westminster Hall, like the Tower, was outside the City, was started shortly after the Conquest, was variously altered and enlarged, and stands unimpaired today. Like the Tower, too, it was the scene of many grim tribunals. Under its roof Richard II was deposed, and Charles II condemned to death. So too were William Wallace, Guy Fawkes, and the Earl of Strafford; and so was *not* Warren Hastings, who was acquitted here after his seven years' ordeal. The old order, changing, took away as it passed many of the most picturesque ceremonials which used to take place in the Hall. With George IV came the last coronation banquet, and the last appearance of a king's champion with his challenge to any who might question the title of the sovereign. Now Westminster Hall does duty only as a vestibule to the Houses of Parliament, the past serving for an ante-chamber to the present.¹

¹ See above, chap. iii, p. 75.

Yet the present, if the Houses of Parliament are to stand for it, is unhappily ill at ease. As far back as history can trace the records, there has been centered here an incessant struggle between the few who were the governors and the many who wished to have a hand on the tiller. Steadily the power of the Commons has encroached on that of the Lords and always the right of helping elect the Commons themselves has been more and more widely extended. Now the vanguard of the suffragettes are doing militant service in Parliament Square at the same time that the members of the lower house are laying down the conditions under which they will allow the Lords to participate any longer in the affairs of state. Every year it becomes harder to make a convincing explanation of the tradition which accounts for the contrast between the sumptuous trappings of the House of Lords and the plainer furnishings of the House of Commons, for the very existence of the Peers' right to rule is in the balance, and it will not be long before their tenure of power will depend on something more vital than the unsupported accident of birth.

The Guildhall, just north of Cheapside, furnishes another link with antiquity. It was built in 1411 on the site of an earlier hall which had



WESTMINSTER HALL,
(From an old engraving)

the same name; just why, is not known. The Great Fire unroofed it and the present rebuilt Hall has been tinkered with since its restoration in the seventeenth century. For five hundred years it has served as the Council Hall of the City. The Lord Mayor's banquet is still held there on the 9th of November. But its chief claim to attention is as a relic, the great and beautiful Hall serving as a show room annexed to the museum and the library, which are shuffled through by miscellaneous sightseers and haunted by students of old London. A famous address to George III by Lord Mayor Beckford, now recorded on his monument there, may, if it was actually delivered, have been shocking to the King. Whether it was or not, it served in point of directness as an admirable precedent for Colonel Roosevelt's utterances on Egypt at the banquet in the spring of 1910. Thus was the Guildhall like the latest edition of the Britannica—"brought down to date."

\ As a group the London church buildings from Westminster Abbey down stand out in brave array. Some, such as the Abbey and St. Mary Overies across the river in Southwark, were not in the fire-swept district. Six others actually in the City survived 1666. Wren's

industry in the following years has already been mentioned. The expansion of London since his time, if all other records failed, could be traced in the church architecture of the widening zones. And many of these churches are crowded with memories of famous worshipers and of intimate ceremonials in the lives of the great, as well as with the actual inscriptions and monuments with which their tombs are marked.

‡ In the church service the familiar interweaving of tradition with modern life is continually displayed. A recent twilight experience in and near St. Paul's will serve as an illustration. Late in an autumn day I entered the cathedral, not so much to look up any particular memorial as to enjoy the massive quiet of the great pile. Wandering about somewhat aimlessly, I discovered that the vesper service was soon to take place. Although the nave and aisles had seemed to be thinly peopled, the approach of the service suddenly assembled several hundred worshipers without apparently attracting any large numbers from outside. As the reading of the prayers and the lessons and the responses of the choir reverberated under the dome, two ideas contributed to the impressive dignity of the hour. One was that under countless other roofs like services were

being carried on at that same time and in the same way; and the other was that here on this spot ever since the days of the first St. Paul's, some such ceremonial had been daily observed. Institutionally the service stood for stupendous length and breadth of influence.

Coming out into the twentieth-century London of motor 'busses and evening newspapers, I attempted to re-enter the past by way of Pater-noster Row, which rambles from St. Paul's Churchyard to Amen Corner and Amen Court. It is a secluded and unworldly little alley, still, as in the past, largely bordered by bookshops, most of them stocked with the kind of literature which one would expect in the neighborhood. Poetry, fiction, and travel have insinuated their way into these precincts, but the presence of such failed to prepare one for the startling spectacle of a sign labeling a generous row of books: "Modern Theology Greatly Reduced!" This in the very shadow of established orthodoxy.

If one chose to swell the catalogue, other structures in considerable numbers could be discussed as representing successive steps in London history all down the line. From the preceding chapters could easily be culled a long list of surviving buildings which would be no more than a

nucleus for the complete inventory that would satisfy an antiquarian. Yet the associations which cluster round an edifice cannot begin to rival those which belong to a thoroughfare. Bishopsgate Street and Cheapside are just as much on the map now as they ever were. Friday, and Wood, and Bread, and Milk streets punctuate the City exactly as they did when Milton trod them. A church loses some of its original charm every time that it is restored. To keep it from tumbling to pieces we have in a way to cheapen it. But the thing that makes a street a street cannot tumble to pieces. We are utterly careless as to whether the cobblestones are new or old; for a street is not a condition; it is a fact.

✓This fact, if the traveler can feel it as well as know it, may quite thrill him as he goes about in the old neighborhoods. A memory of the map of Shakespeare's London with the main thoroughfares and their relative positions is enough to insure any wayfarer against being even temporarily lost in the heart of London. He can find his way above ground with only the kind of difficulty that gives a zest to his little journeys; and if he descend underground into the "Tube" he can know that he is still zigzagging round to connect with the intersections of roads that were

immemorially old before rapid transit was ever dreamed of. There is only one straight line of any length in the whole anatomical-looking diagram of these blue and red low-ways, and that follows the course of Oxford and Kensington High streets and of Holborn.

What is true of the streets is no less true of the public squares. In the oldest parts of town there are few of them. Perhaps because open country was so near at hand in the old days, the largest breathing-spaces, except within the precincts of the men of law, were tiny paved courts. But outside the City proper, the fine estates as they became hemmed in did not surrender all their acres for building purposes. In Bloomsbury, for instance, the "Square" was formed by that Earl of Southampton who was the son of Shakespeare's patron and the father of Lady Rachel Russell—"our square," Lady Russell called it. She was the mistress of Bedford House, which occupied the whole north side. Her name now survives in Russell Square, and that of her house in Bedford Place, which connects Russell and Bloomsbury squares, as well as in near-by Bedford Square. Today, as in the past, the greens in the midst of them are railed in, either closed to all but a privileged few, or opened to the com-

moner under explicit limitation as to hours and use. Yet they are grateful to the wayfarer. All along in this region you may walk for miles and seldom be long out of sight of some open space with fine trees, an immaculate turf, and the beautiful blooms of the English perennials which flourish in the mild moisture of the English year. Often, too, completely surrounded by buildings and unknown to the passer-by, is a lovely garden in perfect trim maintained by the estate which collects the rents and enjoyed by the householders who pay them; a garden, perhaps, which through its ancient ownership supplies a garland to connect us with the days of Richard Steele, and beyond these, almost with the age of Shakespeare.

▲ In general, then, the old streets and old squares prevail, the rejection of the various plans for remodeling the burned city insuring less conventional geometry but a more historic atmosphere for the London we know. Here and there, of course, some bold imagination has acknowledged a pressing need and carried through all the intricate business of securing rights of way and indemnifying outraged property-owners in order to cut a wide swath between two congested centers. Such is Queen Victoria Street, a bold

diagonal from the Bank to Blackfriars, and Regent Street, the sweep already mentioned connecting Oxford and Piccadilly circuses; and such is the latest of these achievements, Kingsway, a short, wide avenue from Holborn to the Strand. So are the passing experiences of George IV, Victoria, and Edward VII recorded in the very structure of the city, superimposed like their own lives on the earlier history of their royal predecessors.

It is only a fair distribution of honors. Kingsway has obliterated a patch of slums and some narrow streets and alleys; it did a service in admitting light and air and in making it easier to get about. Such a process destroyed little. The memory of the past is a shade more dim, as it should be in the natural course of things, but only a shade, for from either side of the new boulevard the old streets amble off between their narrow boundaries. Drury Lane runs at a tangent from its foot, Kean and Kemble streets are near the theater these actors helped make famous. Great Queen Street a little farther on makes a passage to Long Acre on the west; just a few steps to the east Lincoln's Inn Fields lie undefiled; and only a minute or two beyond the upper end Red Lion Square is yet as quietly secluded as at

any time these last few centuries. One would even have a leg to stand on if he argued that these modern encroachments re-emphasize the past quite as much as they violate it.

Subject to the most melancholy of changes is the greatest highway of all—the Thames. From Blackfriars Bridge east it is lined with buildings on either side; from Blackfriars west the north side has been redeemed all the way to Chelsea. Some day, perhaps, when further incalculable sums have been expended to buy back for the Thames the banks that should never have been stolen from it, the river will once more be a thing of beauty; but in the London of modern times no heavier tax can be put upon the imagination than the attempt to picture it as blue and sparkling, dotted with white swans, crowded with passengers and pleasure-seekers, and, below London Bridge, filled with tall-masted ships. Now the shipping is all taken care of at the east end of the city, and from there all the way down to Gravesend and the open sea. Tugs and barges that can slip under the low bridges make an incessant display of ugly industry upon its turbid waters. There is no Vauxhall to go to any more, except the Vauxhall station. No one goes to that by row-boat; the sharp-nosed steamers can

do better, and the Tube is faster still. London has overwhelmed the Thames,

The subtle, ancient, sullen flood
Whom never any passions stir.¹

The oldest of the parks has fared better than the river, for in general it has become at once more picturesque in its native loveliness and more useful to the people as the centuries have passed. Henry VIII secured the Manor of Hyde from the convent of Westminster for a game preserve. As such it was held until Charles I opened it to the public. In the period of the Commonwealth Parliament sold it to private owners for £18,000 in ready money, a transaction that was cheerfully repudiated at the Restoration. From the days of Charles II the parks nearest the Thames, now Hyde, Green, and St. James's, have been the resort of fashion. Vogue first made "the Ring" in Hyde Park the favorite rendezvous and parade ground, then the Mall in St. James's, then the Queen's Walk in Green Park, and now again Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. The freedom and easiness, the frankness of display, the vulgarity if you will, which marked the parades of earlier days are gone. Yet the recognition of

¹ Arthur H. Adams, "Cheyne Walk, Chelsea," from *London Streets*.

class and privilege, as Mr. Howells has pointed out,¹ is no less real today even though less visibly demanded, and yielded in tacit respect. This use of the parks by one part of the public is a modified survival of traditions centuries old, and it is very interesting.

Far more so, however, is the change in the scheme of things which is most effectively demonstrated on Sunday afternoons up in the corner of Hyde Park near the Marble Arch. This is within a stone's throw of Tyburn, the famous execution ground. The days of great disorder in London were the days of most frequent death penalties and of utmost constabular uselessness. A man could talk himself into prison if not to the gallows, provided he was caught; but where one suffered—and far too many did—dozens talked and acted with impunity. In Hyde Park in 1780, at the time of the Gordon Riots, there were 10,000 soldiers in camp. Yet the riots went on for seven days. Now the public gallows is gone and the stocks and pillory are things of the past. The soldiery can be seen from time to time acting their part in state pageants of one sort and another. The matter of keeping order seldom

¹ See W. D. Howells, *London Films*, chap. ii, "Civic and Social Comparisons, Mostly Odious."

attracts one's attention; the London "bobbie" is ever present, courteous, quiet, and impassive, but to the eye he is hardly more than a kind of uniformed street usher. And up in the neighborhood of the Marble Arch you can see him standing half bored while bloody insurrection is being invoked upon the crowd which surrounds him. Apparently he is deaf; yet he is quick to answer an inquiring stranger who has lost his way. Not deaf, then, but simply so used to vocal agitation as not to be interested in it. Anarchy, free trade, equal suffrage, evangelism—to him they are all legitimate subjects for discussion. He has no opinion about them. He is not looking for trouble, he is looking for order; and he almost always finds it, because the social scheme, of which he is a casual index, is far better than it used to be in "the good old days."

Still another sign of change is the passing of the Jehu. The tribe of Tony Wellers has been rail-roaded out of existence, and the cabby of today, though he is making a last stand for it, has had notice served on him by the thousands of "taxi" chauffeurs. There is no particular poetry in riding behind a glass partition with the sight of your fare multiplying itself on a dial in front of you, but for "getting there" it is clean and roomy

and smooth-running and amazingly cheap in London. Not so much can be said for the motor 'bus. The old horse 'bus driver was an institution. He knew London and he could talk about it picturesquely. By profession he was an ageless creature who had been sitting half crouched above the streets since he first drove on them in 1829. No one ever saw a young driver or a new 'bus. The mellow influence of years was as infallibly apparent on every side of them as it was in Fleet Street itself. Had it been otherwise Baedeker could not have featured them with certainty; but as it was, thousands of tourists have believed what he printed, to their own profit. The first experience on one of them is not to be forgotten. Up the tortuous steps to the top, and along the swaying backbone of the creature to the front seat; it projected over the horses' haunches and over the curb; it was in imminent deadly peril of all sorts of catastrophes, but it never collided with anything. "If the driver," said Baedeker, "happens to be obliging (and a small gratuity will generally make him so), he will afford much useful information about the buildings, monuments, and other sights of the route." Not only about these matters, but about history, about the spirit of London, about life itself; and of much

which he did not offer to explain, he was himself the incarnation. He was Democratic Conservatism in the flesh, and he was Free Speech. He was English humor, too, and he had a peculiarly quick fund of caustic retort. But he is vanishing. If one must choose a tense in speaking of him, it is proper to use the past. Young men in visored caps now guide the motor 'busses at double speed. They are barricaded away from the passengers; they may be deaf and dumb for all the public will ever know; and the rapid transit which they accomplish is paid for by the vibration of a fast ocean liner in a heavy sea. The worst feature of 'busses old and new, however, is their advertising signs, in which respect they sin only as all the rest of the town does. The horrors of the practice seem never to have been attacked. The joy of it seems to have struck deep to the hearts of some thousands of men who have things to sell. No wonder that Wells and Locke have dwelt on the advertising mania of such enterprising manufacturers as Uncle Ponderevo of *Tono Bungay* fame, and Clem Sypher, "Friend of Humanity."

It's a twentieth-century London on the surface. England pleasantly attributes the worst vices of its biggest city to the influence of foreign, and especially American, travel. For garishness of

theater and restaurant and for expensiveness of big hotels it can hold up its head with the worst. It is slowly giving ground to the department store. The penalties of cosmopolitan up-to-date-ness are visiting themselves on the oldest city in the English-speaking world. Yet it is the fashionable thing to say that London is slow and unprogressive as compared with New York. American business men talk with contempt about the small-town methods of their English cousins. It appears that they have fewer stenographers per capita, do not average so many telephone calls per day, get down to business later, and when carrying through a transaction involving millions, take more time to make up their minds. The Englishman, confronted with these deadly accusations, replies that proved guilt of such offenses is a sign of his superiority. He is proud to admit that he is not so busy as other men are, and not unwilling also to point out that he gives more time to golf and has redder cheeks. Thus what might have grown into a comfortable argument frays out into a series of hopeless *non-sequiturs*.

To begin with, neither John Bull nor Brother Jonathan is quite candid about telling the whole truth. As a recent critic has pointed out, it is the affectation of the American always to act as

if he were on the way to business, and the pose of the Londoner always to behave as though he were on the way home; each one making his apology the other man's boast. Furthermore, this sort of talk is not capable of any broad application, for it concerns only the tiny minority of employers and capitalists. To anyone who has ever stood on the corner of Wall and Broad streets in New York and watched business surge through those narrow chasms, the look of the crowd in the space inclosed between the Mansion House, the Bank of England, and the Exchange seems familiar enough. In both places is the same lavish outpouring of nervous energy, and the same almost uniformly pallid cheek, eager eye, and hurried pace. Of course there are local differences, but the sober observer sees little to choose between an insurance building thirty or forty stories high and a national bank building four or five acres broad.

Such matters, however, are negligible. The idea to conclude with is that London is one of the spots on earth which is filled with ineffable charm and immeasurable vitality. As I come to the end of the last of these chapters a letter is laid on my desk. "In London generally I am having the 'time of my life.' Never have I seen so many

things that interest and delight me: churches and old buildings, manuscripts and books and people." This is always the reaction of the man with the seeing eye. Whatever may be the kind of object on which his gaze delights to rest, he can find it in this great town. Then, when he is sated with amusement, he can see beneath all the array of things visible the presence of something "far more deeply interfused." For London is the epitome of England and England is the living product of history. What the great city means as a symbol of modern life has been completely stated by Mr. Wells in his epic conclusion to *Tono Bungay*.

\ To run down the Thames so is to run one's hand over the pages in the book of England from end to end. . . . There come first squalid stretches of mean homes right and left and then the dingy industrialism of the south side, and on the north bank the polite long front of nice houses, artistic, literary, administrative people's residences, that stretches from Cheyne Walk nearly to Westminster and hides a wilderness of slums. What a long slow crescendo that is, mile after mile, with the houses crowding closer, the multiplying succession of church towers, the architectural monuments, the successive bridges, until you come out into the second movement of the piece with Lambeth's old palace under your quarter and the houses of Parliament on your bow! Westminster Bridge is ahead of you, then, and through it you flash, and in a moment the round-

faced clock tower cranes up to peer at you again and New Scotland Yard squares at you, a fat beef-eater of a policeman disguised miraculously as a Bastille.

For a stretch you have the essential London; you have Charing Cross railway station, heart of the world, and the Embankment on the north side with its new hotels overshadowing its Georgian and Victorian architecture, and mud and great warehouses and factories, chimneys, shot towers, advertisements on the south. The northward skyline grows more intricate and pleasing, and more and more does one thank God for Wren. Somerset House is as picturesque as the civil war, one is reminded again of the original England, one feels in the fretted sky the quality of Restoration lace. . . .

And in this reach, too, one first meets the seagulls and is reminded of the sea. Blackfriars one takes—just under these two bridges and just between them is the finest bridge moment in the world—and behold, soaring up, hanging in the sky over a rude tumult of warehouses, over a jostling competition of traders, irrelevantly beautiful and altogether remote, Saint Paul's! "Of course!" one says, "Saint Paul's!" It is the very figure of whatever fineness the old Anglican culture achieved, detached, a more dignified and chastened Saint Peter's, colder, grayer, but still ornate; it has never been overthrown, never disavowed, only the tall warehouses and all the roar of traffic have forgotten it, every one has forgotten it; the steamships, the barges, go heedlessly by regardless of it, intricacies of telephone wires and poles cut blankly into its thin mysteries, and presently, when in a moment the traffic permits you and you look round for it, it has dissolved like a cloud into the grey blues of the London sky.

And then the traditional and ostensible England falls from you altogether. The third movement begins, the last great movement in the London symphony, in which the trim scheme of the old order is altogether dwarfed and swallowed up. Comes London Bridge, and the great warehouses tower up about you, waving stupendous cranes, the gulls circle and scream in your ears, large ships lie among their lighters, and one is in the port of the world. . . .

Huge vistas of dock open right and left of one, and here and there beyond and amidst it all are church towers, little patches of indescribably old-fashioned and worn-out houses, riverside tubs and the like, vestiges of townships that were long since torn to fragments and submerged in these new growths. And amidst it all no plan appears, no intention, no comprehensive desire. That is the very key to it all. . . .

Finally, we tear into the great spaces of the future and the turbines fall to talking in unfamiliar tongues. Out to the open we go, to windy freedom and trackless ways. Light after light goes down. England and the Kingdom, Britain and the Empire, the old prides and the old devotions, glide abeam, astern, sink down upon the horizon, pass—pass. The river passes—London passes, England passes. . . .

This is the note I have tried to emphasize. . . .

It is a note of crumbling and confusion, of change and seemingly aimless swelling, of a bubbling up and medley of futile loves and sorrows. But through the confusion sounds another note. Through the confusion something drives, something that is at once human achievement and the most inhuman of all existing things. . . .

But it is something we draw by pain and effort out of the heart of life, that we disentangle and make clear. . . . This thing we make clear is the heart of life. It is the one enduring thing. Men and nations, epochs and civilization pass, each making its contribution. . . . It emerges from life with each year one lives and feels, and generation by generation and age by age.

ILLUSTRATIVE READINGS

The most illuminating single work is W. D. Howells' *London Films*, published in 1905.

FICTION

A very great deal of contemporary fiction is specifically located in London; thus, for instance, *Joseph Vance*, *Alice for Short*, *Somehow Good*, *It Never Can Happen Again*, by William de Morgan; *Fraternity*, portions of *The Country House*, *The Man of Property*, and *A Commentary*, in the works of John Galsworthy; *Simon the Jester*, portions of *Septimus*, *The Morals of Marcus Ordeyne*, and so forth, from William J. Locke; *A Wanderer in London*, *London Lavender*, *Over Bemerton's*, *Mr. Ingle-side*, and others, from E. V. Lucas; *Ann Veronica*, *Tono Bungay*, *The New Machiavelli*, and *Marriage*, from H. G. Wells.

DRAMA

There is the same abundance of recent drama specifically located in London. This would include such as the following: *Widowers' Houses*, *Lady Barbara*, by Bernard Shaw; *Gay Lord Quex*, *The Benefit of the Doubt*, *Mid-Channel*, *Letty*, *The Princess and the Butterfly*, and *Sweet Lavender*, by Arthur Wing Pinero; *The Crusaders*,

The Liars, The Rogue's Comedy, The Case of Rebellious Susan, The Dancing Girl, by Henry Arther Jones; *Lady Windermere's Fan, An Ideal Husband*, by Oscar Wilde; and *The Madras House*, by Granville Barker.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX
ILLUSTRATIVE NOVELS

ADDISON, STEELE, ETC.

The *Spectator* (1709-14). The material presented in the *Spectator* is too abundant to submit to indexing here. The nearest analogy in this list is Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, though in some respects it is a sort of expurgated form of Ward's *The London Spy*.

AINSWORTH, WILLIAM H.

The Constable of the Tower (1861). A story of the ambitious plottings of the Duke of Somerset and Sir Thomas Seymour on the accession of Edward VI, 1549.

Bishopsgate, Book I, chap. ii.

Charing Cross, Book I, chap. xvi.

Cheapside, Book II, chap. v.

Chelsea Manor-House in Cheyne Walk, Book II, chap. x.

Fleet, Street, Bridge, Prison, Book II, chap. v.

London, City of, Book I, chap. ii.

Ludgate, Book II, chap. v.

St. Paul's, Old, Book II, chap. v.

The Thames, Book I, chap. ii.

Tower of London, Book I, chap. v.

Tower Hill, Book I, chap. ii; Book III, chap. ix;
Book IV, chap. vi.

Westminster Abbey, Book II, chap. vi.

Westminster Hall, Book II, chap. vii.

Westminster Palace, Book I, chap. ii.

Jack Sheppard (1839). A romance woven around the life of a notorious robber and housebreaker, with mention of the struggle between the Jacobites and Protestants in the opening years of the eighteenth century.

Alsatia, Epoch III, chap. viii.

Bedlam, Epoch III, chap. viii.

Clerkenwell Bridewell, Epoch III, chap. iv.

Execution at Tyburn, Epoch III, chap. xxxii.

Highgate, Epoch II, chap. xi.

Holborn, Epoch II, chap. xi.

Hurricane of 1703, Epoch I, chaps. vi, vii.

London Bridge, Epoch I, chap. vii.

Mohocks, Epoch II, chap. xi.

Newgate to Tyburn, Procession from, Epoch III, chap. xxxi.

Newgate Ward, Epoch III, chap. iv.

Old Bailey, Epoch II, chap. xvi.

Old Mint, Epoch I, chap. ii.

Old Newgate Prison, Epoch III, chap. ix (entire).

Oxford Road, Epoch III, chap. i.

St. Saviour's Church, Epoch I, chap. vi.

Tyburn Gate, Epoch, III, chap. i.

Gay, Hogarth, Thornhill, Dr. James, Epoch III, chap. xvi.

The Tower of London (1840). The tragic story of Lady Jane Grey's hopeless conspiracy for the throne, and her execution by Queen Mary. London is pre-

sented, and particularly the stronghold of the Tower, in the period of 1537 to 1554.

Aldgate, Book II, chap. i.

Baptist's Head Tavern (Creed Lane), Book I, chaps. ii, ix.

Durham House (Ancient site of the Adelphi), Book I, chap. i.

Eastcheap, Book II, chap. i.

London Bridge, Book II, chap. xxix; Book I, chap. i.

London, City of, Book I, chap. i; Book II, chap. i.

Ludgate, Book I, chap. ix.

St. Paul's, Old, Book I, chap. i.

Thames, Book I, chap. i; Book II, chaps. xxvii, xxxii.

Tower of London, Map, Book II; Book I, chaps. i, ii, ix, x, xiii, xvi; Book II, chaps. iii, iv, xxvii, xxix, xxx, xxxiii.

Westminster Hall, Book II, chap. v.

Old St. Paul's (1841). A story of the experiences of a London grocer and his family during the period of the last London plague and the Great Fire. The story with the exception of a few chapters is located entirely in the immediate neighborhood of St. Paul's Cathedral. The specific references are too numerous to tabulate in full. The following entire chapters are, however, of special interest:

Fire, Progress of the, Book VI, chap. iii.

Fire, The First Night of, Book VI, chap. ii.

London (Old) from Old St. Paul's, Book II, chap. vi.

Plague at Its Height, The, Book IV, chap. i.

- Plague (How the Grocer Shut up His House),
Book II, chap. xi.
- Plague (In What Manner the Grocer Victualled
His House), Book II, chap. ii.
- Progress of the Pestilence, The, Book II, chap. i.
- St. Paul's (How St. Paul's Was Used as a Pest-
house), Book III, chap. v.
- St. Paul's, The Burning of, Book VI, chap. vii.
- St. Paul's Walk, Book II, chap. vii.

BESANT, WALTER, AND RICE, JAMES

- The Chaplain of the Fleet* (1881). A story of lively interest, having for a background the London of 1780, with the famous jail of George III's reign. It is full of antiquarian lore about streets, houses, theaters, etc.
- Fleet Bridge, Part I, chaps. iv, vi; Part II, chap. xxi.
- Fleet Lane, Part I, chap. iv.
- Fleet Market, Part I, chaps. iv, v, x, xi, xii; Part II, chap. xxii.
- Fleet Prison, Part I, chap. vii.
- Fleet Prison, Rules and Liberties of, Part I, chap. vi; Part II, chaps. ix, xiv.
- Fleet Street, Part I, chap. xxi.
- Gray's Inn Gardens, Part I, chap. vi.
- London, City of, Part I, chaps. iv, viii.
- Ludgate, Part I, chap. iv.
- Ludgate Hill, Part I, chap. iv.
- Newgate Prison, Part I, chap. viii.
- Red Lion Street, Part II, chap. i.
- Strand, Part I, chap. viii.

- St. Giles's Church (Cripplegate), Part I, chap. viii.
 St. James's Park, Part I, chap. viii.
 St. Paul's, Part I, chap. viii.
 St. Paul's Coffee-house, Part I, chap. iv.
 Westminster Abbey, Part I, chap. viii.
 White Horse Inn, Part I, chap. iv.

BESANT, SIR WALTER

All Sorts and Conditions of Men (1882). The story deals with the philanthropic schemes of the heiress to a great East Side brewery, and presents vivid contemporary pictures of the life of the neglected Whitechapel quarters.

- Fleet Street, chap. xvii.
 London, City of, chap. xxxvi.
 London Docks, chap. xxii.
 Minories, chap. xii.
 Piccadilly, chap. xvii.
 St. George's (Mile End Road), chap. iii.
 Stepney Churchyard, chap. v.
 Stepney Green, chaps. i, v, vii, viii, xvi, xxxviii.
 Stepney Limehouse, chaps. iii, xii.
 Trinity Almshouse, chaps. vii, xii.
 Victoria Park, chap. xvi.
 Wellclose Square, chaps. i, xxvii.
 West India Dock Road, chap. xii.
 Whitechapel Church, chap. xviii.
 Whitechapel Road, chaps. iv, vii.

Dorothy Forster (1884). The domestic history of the Forsters of Bamborough Castle during the Jacobite intrigue of 1715. The tragic narrative of rebellion

leads the reader at length up to London, into Georgian society, and into Newgate and the Tower.

Cheapside, Vol. II, chap. xxii.

Drury Lane, Vol. II, chap. iv.

Drury Lane Theatre, Vol. II, chaps. iv, xi.

Fleet Gate, Vol. II, chap. xxii.

Fleet Market, Vol. II, chap. xxii.

Fleet Prison, Vol. II, chap. xxii.

Holborn, Vol. II, chap. xxii.

Lincoln's Inn Fields, Vol. II, chaps. xii, xxii.

Lords, House of, Vol. II, chap. xviii.

Newgate, Vol. II, chaps. xiii, xvi, xxi, xxii.

Newgate Street, Vol. II, chaps. xv, xxi.

Snow Hill, Vol. II, chap. xxii.

Somerset House, Vol. II, chap. xi.

Spring Gardens, Vol. II, chap. xi.

Strand, Vol. II, chap. xi.

Street Riots, Vol. II, chap. xiii.

Tower Hill, Vol. II, chap. xx.

Tower of London, Vol. II, chaps. xv, xx.

Westminster Abbey, Vol. II, chap. xi.

Westminster Hall, Vol. II, chap. xviii.

No Other Way (1901). A story revolving around a grotesque situation, which incidentally gives a fairly vivid picture of the conditions of debtors in the King's Bench and Newgate in 1750.

Fleet Market, chap. xxiv.

Grapes Tavern (Jermyn Street), chaps. viii, xxiii.

Gray's Inn Cockpit, chaps. viii, xxi.

Great Hermitage Street (White Dog Tavern),
chaps. xvii, xix, xxv.

Green Park, chap. vii.
 King's Bench, chaps. ii, iv, xxiv.
 King Street, chap. i.
 Long Acre, chap. ix.
 Marylebone Gardens, chap. ix.
 Newgate, chap. iii.
 St. James's Park, chaps. vi, ix.
 St. James's Square, chaps. vi, ix, xviii.
 Thames, The, chap. ix.
 Vauxhall, chap. ix.

The Orange Girl (1899) is about an actress and a man twice freed by her from prison. The story deals much with police and higher courts, and imprisonment for debt and other charges.

Black Jack, The, Book II, chap. v.
 Bow Street Office (trial at police court), Book II, chap. viii.
 Drury Lane Theatre, Book I, chap. v.
 Funeral of Wealthy Merchant, Book I, chap. vi.
 High Street, Holborn, Book II, chap. ii.
 King's Bench Prison, Book I, chap. x.
 Ludgate Hill, Book I, chap. v.
 Newgate Prison, Book II, chap. ix.
 Old Bailey, Book I, chap. v., Book II, chap. xii.
 Pillory, The, Book II, chap. xx.
 Sanctuary of Southwark, Book I, chap. ii.
 St. George's Fields, Book I, chap. ii.
 St. George's South London, Book I, chap. iv.
 St. Martin's Lane, Book II, chap. ii.
 St. Paul's, Book I, chap. v.
 Theft, Capital Punishment, Book II, chap. xxii.

St. Katherine's by the Tower (1891). A novel whose only historical interest is in its portrayal of an English Jacobin Club in the year 1793. The scene is the eastern and poorer section of the city beyond the Tower.

Bow Street, Part II, chap. xiii.

Cheapside, Part II, chap. xi.

Cock Tavern, The, Part II, chap. ii.

Fleet Street, Part II, chap. ii.

Jacobite Club (King's Head, Little Alice Street, Whitechapel), Part II, chaps. i, ix.

London, East, Part II, chap. xi.

Newgate Prison, Part II, chaps. xiii, xiv, xv, xviii, xix, xxiii, xxx.

Pool, The, Part I, chap. vi.

Rainbow, Part II, chap. ii.

Session House (of the Old Bailey), Part II, chap. xvii.

Somerset House, Part II, chap. ii.

St. Katherine's, Church of, Part I, chap. vii; Part II, chap. iii.

St. Katherine's, Precinct of, Part I, chaps. i, vi.

St. Sepulchre's Church, Part II, chap. xxx.

Thames, Part II, chap. xii.

Tower, Part II, chap. vii.

Tower Hill, Part II, chap. vii.

Vauxhall, Part II, chap. xxviii.

Whitechapel, Shoreditch, etc., Part II, chap. xi.

BROOKE, HENRY

The Fool of Quality (1776-70). A novel dealing with the history of Henry, Earl of Moreland, with disser-

tations introduced on politics, morals, and social amelioration.

Bethlehem Hospital, chap. xvii.

Charing Cross, chap. vii.

Cheapside, chap. vii.

Fleet Prison, chap. xv.

Fleet Street, chap. vii.

Islington, chap. ix.

London, City of, chap. xvii.

Markham's Coffee-house, chap. vii.

Newgate, chap. vii.

Old Bailey, chap. viii.

Smithfield, chap. xvii.

St. Clement's Church, chap. xvii.

St. James's Coffee-house, chap. xvii.

St. James's Court, chap. xvii.

Strand, chap. xvii.

Temple Exchange Coffee-house, chap. xvii.

Tower (Lion's Den), chap. xvii.

BURNEY, FRANCES

Cecilia (1782). A story comparable to the same author's *Evelina*—the experiences of an attractive and level-headed country girl, who comes up to London about the year 1775, into very definite contact with various types of London men and women.

Almack's, chap. v.

Brooks's Club, chap. vii.

Grub Street, chap. ix.

Haymarket, chap. viii.

Moorfields, chap. ix.

Pantheon, chap. viii.

Tyburn, Malefactors on Way, to chap. ix.
Vauxhall, chap. vi.

Evelina (1778). *Evelina* is the daughter of a nobleman who refuses to recognize his child. She is brought up and educated by a country squire. The story tells of *Evelina's* visit to London in 1759 as a young and inexperienced girl, her marriage, and final reconciliation with her contrite and remorseful parent. (Footnotes refer to George Bell & Sons' edition, London, 1898 with introduction and notes by Annie Raine Ellis.)

Marylebone Gardens, Letter LII, and footnote,
p. 242.

Pantheon, Letter XXIII, and footnote, p. 104.

Ranelagh, Letter XII, and footnote, p. 29.

Sights of London, Letter XLIV.

Vauxhall, Letter XLVI, and footnote, p. 199.

CHURCHILL, WINSTON

Richard Carvel (1899). An autobiography written in contemporary language, covering the period of the American Revolution, and giving clear description of life in the Maryland of that time, and Georgian London, with its streets and haunts, its great houses, its coffee-houses, and theaters.

Adelphi Terrace, chaps. xxx, xxxvi.

Almack's, chap. xxxi.

Bedford House, chap. xxxv.

Brooks's Club (Ordinary), chaps. xxxi, xxxviii.

Buckingham Palace, chap. xxiii.

Butcher's Row, chap. xxiii.

- Castle Yard (Sponging House), chap. xxiv.
 Charing Cross, chap. xxiii.
 Don Saltero's Coffee-house and Museum (Chelsea),
 chap. xxxvi.
 Drury Lane, chap. xxxii.
 Drury Lane Playhouse, chap. xxxvi.
 Great Russell Street, chap. xxxv.
 Holland House, chaps. xxiii, xxxix.
 Hyde Park, chap. xxvii.
 Kensington Palace, chap. xxiii.
 London Bridge, chap. xxx.
 Pall Mall, chaps. xxiv, xxvi.
 Royal Exchange, chap. xxiii.
 Star and Garter Inn (Pall Mall), chap. xxiii.
 Strand, The, chap. xxiii.
 Strawberry Hill, chap. xxix.
 St. James's Street, chaps. xxvi, xl.
 Temple Bar, chap. xxiii.
 Temple Gardens, chap. xxx.
 Thames, The, chap. xxx.
 Vauxhall, chap. xl.
 Whitehall, chap. xxx.
 White Horse, chap. xxvii.
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- Garrick, chap. xxxvi.
 Dr. Johnson, chap. xxxvi.
 Horace Walpole, chaps. xxii, xxvi, xxix.
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DEFOE, DANIEL

Journal of the Plague Year (1722). A powerful narrative of facts concerning conditions in London during the plague year of 1665. (References are to the Sir

Walter Scott edition of Defoe's works. D. A. Talboys, printer, Oxford, 1840.)

Aldgate, p. 170.

Aldgate Churchyard, pp. 59-65.

Aldersgate Street, pp. 155-56.

Bishopsgate Churchyard, p. 26.

Bow, The, p. 126.

Butcher's Row, pp. 77-79.

Holborn, p. 20.

Old Street, p. 172.

Spittlefields, p. 79.

Still-yard Stairs, p. 158.

Streets of London, pp. 18, 77-78, 89, 90, 163-65.

St. Giles's Parish, p. 3.

Thames, The, pp. 105, 112.

Westminster, p. 173.

Whitechapel, Broad Street, pp. 8, 98-99.

DEKKER, THOMAS

Guls Horn-booke (1609). A bit of contemporary satire on the ways of the young gallant in London. It belongs in the same category as Ned Ward's *The London Spy* of the early eighteenth century, and Pierce Egan's *Life in London* of the early nineteenth century. The chief points are discussed each by itself in the separate chapters.

Dress and Tailors, chaps. i, ii.

Powles-walkes, chap. iv.

The City Streets at Night, chap. viii.

The Ordinary (or Restaurant), chap. v.

The Playhouse, chap. vi.

The Tavern, chap. vii.

DICKENS, CHARLES

Bleak House (1852-53). One of the Dickens stories which lays greatest stress on the intricacy of the legal machinery in the English courts of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Chancery, The, chap. i.

Chancery Lane, chap. xxxix.

Cook's Court, chap. ix.

Cursitor Street, chap. ix.

Lincoln's Inn, chap. xxxix.

Lincoln's Inn Fields, chap. ix.

Lincoln's Inn Halls, chap. i.

David Copperfield (1849-50). The story (autobiographical to a considerable degree) of David Copperfield in London in the warehouse of Murdstone & Grinby, in the school at Canterbury, and later in the city as lawyer's clerk, reporter, and successful author.

Buckingham Street, Adelphi, chap. xxiii.

Covent Garden Theatre (Julius Caesar and Pantomime), chap. xix.

Doctors' Commons, chap. xxiii.

Fleet Street, Adelphi, chap. xi.

Golden Cross and Charing Cross, chaps. xix, xl.

Golden Square, chap. l.

Gray's Inn Coffee-house, chap. lix.

River Bank (Blackfriars to Westminster), chap. xlvii.

St. Martins, Drury Lane, and Covent Garden, chap. xi.

Great Expectations (1860-61). A story of lowest London life along the Thames from the city to the sea.

Bartholomew Close, chap. xx.

- Barnardo's Inn, chap. xxi.
- Little Britain, chap. xx.
- Newgate Prison, chaps. xx, xxxii.
- Smithfield, chap. xx.
- Temple, chap. xlvii.
- Temple Stairs, chap. xlvii.
- Thames, chap. liv.

Little Dorrit (1855-57). Account of the changes of fortune of the Dorrit family, the father of whom is imprisoned for debt and subsequently released from the Marshalsea, and of Mr. Merdle, an operator in high finance.

- Adelphi, Book II, chap. ix.
- Bleeding Heart Yard, Book II, chap. ix.
- Covent Garden, Book I, chap. xiv.
- Ludgate Hill, London from, Book I, chap. iii.
- Marshalsea Prison, Book I, chaps. vi, viii, ix.
- Smithfield to St. Paul's, Book I, chap. xiii.
- St. Bartholomew's, Book I, chap. xiii.
- St. Paul's to the River, Book I, chap. iii.

Nicholas Nickleby (1838-39). The story of Nicholas Nickleby, his sister, and their mother, and their experiences as people of small estate in the face of not overwhelming adversity.

- Cadogan Place and Sloane St., chap. xxi.
- Cavendish Square, chap. x.
- Golden Square, chaps. ii, xiv.
- Manchester Buildings, chap. xvi.
- Snow Hill, chap. xiv.
- Thames Street (Residence of Mrs Nickleby and Kate), chap. xi.

Oliver Twist (1837-38). The story of an English boy who runs away to London, falls into the hands of professional criminals, and in their surroundings sees the darkest side of London slum life. His experience early and late in the book among people of means and morals furnishes a somewhat perfunctory contrast to his more rigorous experiences among the criminal classes.

Approach from East to Smithfield Market, chap. xxi.

Entrance to Town, chap. viii.

The Green—Clerkenwell, chap. x.

Jacob's Island, chap. l.

Saffron Hill, chap. xxv.

A Tale of Two Cities (1859). One of Dickens' two historical stories. This like the other, *Barnaby Rudge*, emphasizes the developing spirit of democracy during the closing quarter of the eighteenth century. The scenes are laid in London and Paris about the time of the Reign of Terror.

Bailey, The Old, Book II, chap. i.

Fleet Street, Book II, chap. vi.

Soho Square, Book II, chap. xiv.

DOYLE, CONAN

Rodney Stone (1896). A novel of incident and action in the years 1812-16, dealing largely with the bruisers of the prize-ring.

Covent Garden, chap. ix.

Haymarket, chap. ix.

Jermyn Street, chap. ix.

- Lloyd's Coffee-house, chap. ix.
 London (general description), chap. viii.
 London, City, chap. ix.
 London, West End, chap. ix.
 Stephen's Inn (Bond Street), chap. ix.
 "Wagon and Horse's" Sporting House, chaps.
 x, xi.
 Watier's, chap. ix.
 Westminster Bridge, chap. xiv.
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- Beau Brummel, chap. ix.
 Sheridan, chap. ix.
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EGAN, PIERCE

Real Life in London; or, The Rambles and Adventures of Bob Tallyho, Esq., and His Cousin, the Hon. Tom Dashall, through the Metropolis; Exhibiting a Living Picture of Fashionable Characters, Manners and Amusements in High and Low Life. The first two volumes (1821) were followed by a second work in 1828, *A Finish to the Adventures of Tom, Jerry and Logic in Their Pursuits through Life in and out of London*.

This is a loosely connected series of sketches well described in the title, and interesting as a forerunner of the *Pickwick Papers*. The definite allusions to London locations are too numerous to be listed in these pages. References to the chief architectural works are accompanied by specific descriptions after the fashion of Baedeker. For the reader who wishes specific material, the running descriptions

of each chapter which appear in the table of contents furnish a fairly short cut to the passages of most interest.

FIELDING, HENRY

Amelia (1751). In *Amelia* Fielding draws a satirical picture of society in its pleasures and crimes, and, through the conditions of life in Newgate and the poorer quarters of London, presents an attack on the ill-working of certain of the English laws. Fielding's own position as magistrate enabled him to give accurate details. *Amelia* is said to be a study of his first wife.

Bridewell Prison, Vol. I, Book I, chaps. iii, iv, v.

Gray's Inn Lane, Vol. II, Book VIII, chaps. i, v.

Haymarket Theatre, Vol. II, Book X, chap. ii.

Hyde Park, Vol. I, Book I, chap. v.

King's Arms Tavern, Vol. II, Book X, chap. v.

Newgate, Vol. II, Book XII, chap. v.

Ranelagh, Vol. II, Book VII, chap. vii.

St. James's Park, Vol. I, Book IV, chap. vii;

Book V, chap. ix.

Vauxhall, Vol. II, Book IX, chap. ix.

Tom Jones (1749). A novel of manners presenting "the complete and unexpurgated history of a young man and his doings, good and bad," and all phases of life in the country and in town in the year 1745.

Bond Street, Vol. II, Book XIII, chap. v.

Gatehouse, Vol. II, Book XVIII, chap. v.

Gray's Inn Lane, Vol. II, Book XIII, chap. ii.

Grosvenor Square, Vol. II, Book XIII, chap. ii.

Haymarket, Vol. II, Book XIII, chap. v.

Holborn, Vol. II, Book XIII, chap. ii.

Old Bailey, Vol. II, Book XVIII, chap. v.

Playhouse, A (excellent description of a performance of Hamlet by Garrick), Vol. II, Book XVI, chap. v.

Piccadilly, Vol. II, Book XVI, chap. ii.

Jonathan Wild (1743). An ironic exposition of the nefarious character of a London thief hanged at Tyburn in 1725.

Covent Garden Eating House, Book II, chap. ix.

Drury Lane Theatre, Book III, chap. xi.

Newgate, Book III, chap. iv; Book IV, chaps. ii, iii.

Old Bailey, Book II, chap. v.

St. James's, Book II, chap. xii.

Tyburn, Book IV, chap. xiv.

FIELDING, SARAH

Adventures of David Simple in Search of a Faithful Friend (1744). A moralizing novel inspired by Richardson's *Pamela*, in which a virtuous young man sets out in a quest which takes him to various parts of London in search of an ideal friend.

Covent Garden, Vol. I, Book I, chaps. ix, x, xi;
Vol. II, Book III, chap. vi.

Pall Mall (assemblies, taverns, etc.), Vol. I, Book II, chaps. i, ii, iii.

Royal Exchange, Vol. I, Book I, chap. iv.

St. James's Street, Vol. II, Book III, chap. vi.

Thames, The, Vol. II, Book IV, chap. iii.

GOLDSMITH, OLIVER

The Citizen of the World (1756), or Letters from a Chinese Philosopher residing in London to his friends in the East.

Coronation of George III, Preparation for, Letter CV.

Drury Lane and Covent Garden (without naming), Letter LXXIX.

Election, Letter XCIII.

St. Paul's Cathedral, Letter XLI.

Theater, Description of, Letter XXI.

Vauxhall, Letter LXXI.

Westminster Abbey, Letter XIII.

Westminster Hall and Courts of Justice, Letter XCVIII.

JAMES, G. P. R.

Agincourt (1844). The story of a young knight in the service of Henry V at London and abroad during the early years of his reign, from 1413 to 1415.

“Acorn, The” (An Inn in the Strand), chaps. x, xiii.
Charing Cross, chap. xiii.

London, City of (from the Thames), chap. vii.

St. James's Hospital, chaps. vii, viii.

Temple, The Old, chap. xiv.

Westminster Abbey, chap. xi.

Westminster Palace, chap. viii.

Darnley (1829). The story of the life of a young lord in the reign of Henry VIII. Cardinal Wolsey and other historic characters figure in the narrative.

London Bridge, chap. xiv.

Pageant and Masque Ball in the Court of Henry VIII, chap. xx.

Westminster, From London to, chap. xiv.

York Place (afterward Whitehall), chap. xxiii.

KINGSLEY, CHARLES

Allan Locke (1849). The story deals largely with the subject of sweatshops and the Chartist agitation. It also comments at length on the attitude of the dissenting clergy as well as that of the Church of England. The time is about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Chartist Uprising, The, chap. x.

Clare Market to St. Giles (description of squalor and the tenements), chap. viii.

Dulwich Gallery, chap. vi.

Riot among Laborers Outside of London, chap. xxviii.

LYTTON, EDWARD BULWER

Devercux (1829). The description of the life of a rich young man, heir to a title, who spends more or less time in London (about 1704), amusing himself as men of his class and generation could. The historical characters introduced are not closely woven with the main plot.

Kit-cat Club, Book II, chap. vi.

Ladies Patches, Book II, chap. ii.

Mohawks, Book II, chaps. vii, xi.

New Exchange Shops, Book II, chap. i.

Puppet Show, Book II, chap. i.

Saltero, Don, Book II, chap. vi.
 Will's Coffee-house, Book II, chap. iii.

Addison, Steele, *Spectator*, Book II, chap. iii.
 Cibber, Book II, chap. ii.
 Cromwell, Richard, Book III, chap. iv.
 "Beau" Fielding, Book II, chap. i.
 Henry St. John (Lord Bolingbroke), Book I, chap.
 v., Book II, chaps. vii, x; Book IV, chaps. ii,
 iii; Book VI, chap. vi.
 Kneller, Sir Godfrey, Book II, chap. viii.
 Dr. Swift, Book II, chap. viii.

The Last of the Barons (1843). A story of the relations of Warwick, the kingmaker, with Edward IV and Henry VI in about 1467.
 Apprentices, Book II, chap. i.
 Charing Cross and Vicinity, Book I, chap. i.
 Smithfield, Tournament in, Book IV, chap. vii.
 Strand, Book II, chap. i.
 Tower of London, Book II, chaps. ii, iii; Book III, chap. v.

RICHARDSON, SAMUEL

Sir Charles Grandison, Bart. (1753). A novel in the form of letters, not specific in references, but giving an excellent conception of fashionable life in London in the middle of the eighteenth century. The hero is possessed of every possible virtue; the heroine is quite without peers for beauty, intelligence, and

generally admirable qualities. The fortunes of the pair are a background for a philosophic representation of life.

SCOTT, SIR WALTER

Kenilworth (1821). The story deals with court life and the fortunes of the rival lords Essex and Leicester, under Queen Elizabeth in 1575.

The Thames, chaps. xv, xvii.

The Fortunes of Nigel (1822). A story of a young Scottish nobleman's experiences in London and at the Court of James I in 1604.

Alsatia, Book I, chap. xvi.

Apprentices, Book I, chaps. i, ii.

Charing Cross, Book I, chap. v.

Fleet Street, Book I, chap. i.

Fleet Street (a barber shop in), Book II, chap. vi.

Fortune Theatre, Book I, chap. xii.

Lane (a typical one near Paul's Wharf), Book I, chap. iii.

Ordinary, The (a fashionable French eating house), Book I, chaps. xi, xii.

Strand, The, Book I, chap. v.

St. James's Park, Book I, chap. xv.

Temple, The, Book I, chap. xvi.

Temple Bar, Book I, chap. v.

Temple Bar (a typical shop near), Book I, chap. i.

Thames, The, Book I, chap. ix.

Tower, The, Book II, chaps. xii, xiii.

Whitefriars, Book I, chaps. xvi, xvii.

Whitehall, Book I, chap. v.

Peril of the Peak (1823) is chiefly a story of the struggle in England between Papists and Puritans. The novel is full of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and King Charles II.

King's Benches at Westminster, Court of (trial at),
Book III, chap. vi.

Justice of the Peace (trial before), Book II, chap. xv.
Mall, The, Book II, chap. xiii.

Newgate Prison, Life in, Book II, chaps. xvi, xvii,
xviii.

Savoy, The, Book II, chap. xiii.

Somerset House, Book II, chap. xiii.

Tower of London, Book III, chap. i.

Tower of London (White Tower), Book III, chap. v.

Whitehall, Palace of, Book II, chap. xiii.

The Pirate (1821). A story located in the Orkney Islands in the year 1724-25, and involving among other characters that of Claud Halcro—a kind of belated minstrel whose chief glory in life was drawn from the fact that at one period in London he had associated with Dryden and his fellows at the "Wits'" Coffee-house, his own residence being near by on Russell Street, Covent Garden. This character, who appears hither and yon, is developed more fully than anywhere else in chap. xii.

SMITH, HORACE

Brambletye House (1826). A valuable picture of life in the period of the Great Civil War, showing the contrast between the courts of the Protector and Charles II under the Restoration, and London in the

Plague and Fire year. Authentic ballads and songs of the time are profusely introduced.

Aldersgate Street, Vol. III, chap. ii.

Aldgate Churchyard, Vol. III, chap. ii.

Cheapside, Vol. III, chap. ii.

Fleet Street, Vol. III, chap. vii.

Hampton Court (Cromwell's reign), Vol. I, chap. vi.

Hampton Court (Charles II's reign), Vol. II, chap. v.

London Bridge, Vol. III, chap. vi.

London, City of, Vol. III, chaps. ii, vi.

Mall, The, Vol. II, chap. v.

Mulberry Gardens, Vol. I, chap. vii.

St. James's Park, Vol. II, chap. iii; Vol. III, chap. vi.

St. Paul's Cathedral, Vol. III, chaps. vi, vii.

Spring Gardens, Vol. I, chap. vii; Vol. III, chap. vi.

Stepney, Vol. III, chap. ii.

Streets (Plague year), Vol. III, chap. ii.

Temple, The, Vol. III, chap. vii.

Temple Bar, Vol. III, chaps. vi, vii.

Thames, Vol. III, chap. vi.

Tower, Vol. III, chap. ix.

Westminster, Vol. III, chap. vii.

Whitehall, Vol. I, chap. vii; Vol. III, chaps. v, vii.

Cromwell, Vol. I, chap. vi.

Lovelace, Richard, Vol. I, chap. vii.

Marvel, Andrew, Vol. I, chap. vi.

Milton, Vol. I, chap. vi; Vol. III, chap. v.

Walton, Izaak, Vol. II, chap. v.

SMOLLETT, TOBIAS

Ferdinand, Count Fathom (1753). The life of a scamp, who, in spite of his ready wit met such misfortune in his adventures that he later in life reformed. Scenes in and out of London.

The Rage of Gaming, chap. i.

Humphrey Clinker (1771). The travels and observations of a Welsh family in England and Wales, presenting in letter form a running comment on the customs and institutions of the time.

Assembly, Mrs. Cornelys' (a typical gathering of beaux and wits): "Lydia Melford to Miss Laetitia Willis," London, May 31.

British Museum: "Matt. Bramble to Dr. Lewis," London, June 2.

Clerkenwell Prison: "J. Melford to Miss Laetitia Willis," London, June 11.

Covent Garden: "M. Bramble to Dr. Lewis," Bath, April 23.

Grub Street Assembly, A: "J. Melford to Sir Watkin Phillips," London, June 10.

London, General Aspects: "M. Bramble to Dr. Lewis," London, May 22; "Winifred Jenkins to Mrs. Mary Jones," London, June 3; Markets, Water, Drainage, etc.: "M. Bramble to Dr. Lewis," London, June 8; London Streets: "Lydia Melford to Miss Laetitia Willis," London, May 31. London Tower: "Winifred Jenkins to Mrs. Mary Jones," London, June 3.

Long Acre: "J. Melford to Sir Watkin Phillips," London, June 10.

- Ranelagh: "M. Bramble to Dr. Lewis," London, May 22; "Lydia Melford to Miss Laetitia Willis," London, May 31.
- Sadler's Wells: "Winifred Jenkins to Mrs. Mary Jones," London, June 3.
- St. James's Court: "J. Melford to Sir Watkin Phillips, Bart." London, June 2.
- Thames: "Lydia Melford to Miss Laetitia Willis," London, May 31.
- Vauxhall: "M. Bramble to Dr. Lewis," London, May 22; "Lydia Melford to Miss Laetitia Willis," London, May 31.

THACKERAY, WILLIAM MAKEPEACE

Barry Lyndon (1856). The life and adventures of a dashing young Irish nobleman, who enlists in the Seven Years' War, and makes and loses a great name for himself in the world of fashion between the years 1746 and 1811.

- Assembly, An, at Mrs. Cornelys' (Carlisle House), chap. xvii.
- Cocoa-tree, chap. xvii.
- Fleet Prison, chap. xix.
- Gray's Inn, chap. xix.
- Mall, The, chap. xviii.
- Newmarket, chap. xvii.
- Ranelagh, chaps. xii, xviii.
- St. James's Church, chap. xviii.
- White's Chocolate House, chap. xvi.
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- Boswell, chap. i.
- Goldsmith, chap. i.
- Dr. Johnson, chap. i.

Henry Esmond (1852). The supposedly illegitimate child of Marquis Esmond. He is full of gratitude for the care he receives from his father's heir. Therefore, when at Lord Esmond's death he learns that he himself is the true Marquis, he destroys the proofs and confession in order that the widow and the children may continue the succession. He serves in wars against France in 1704-8. Time, end of King William's reign, Queen Anne's, and the beginning of George I's.

Gray's Inn, Book I, chap. xiv.

Greyhound Tavern in Charing Cross, Book I, chaps. x, xiv.

Leicester Fields (Dueling, Standard Tavern), Book I, chap. xiv.

Newgate Prison, Book II, chaps. i, ii.

River (London Bridge), Book I, chap. iii.

River (to Chelsea), Book II, chap. iii.

Theatre (Duke's Play House), Book I, chap. xiv.

Trial of Peers for Dueling, Book II, chap. i.

The "Rose," Book II, chap. v.

Addison, Book II, chap. v.

Addison and Steele, Book II, chap. xi.

Richard Steele, Book I, chap. vi; Book II, chaps. ii, v, x, xv.

Swift, Dean, Book III, chap. ii.

"Wits of 1712" (Swift), Book III, chap. v.

Pendennis (1849-50). Story of the experiences of young Pendennis as he learns life through his experiences first in and out of the city.

Alsatia, chap. xlii.

Drawing Room, A London, chap. xxxvii.

- Fielding's Head, *The Back Kitchen* of, chap. xxx.
 Fleet Prison, chap. xxxi.
 Lamb Court (Pendennis' first day in London and his quarters—Lamb Court), chap. xxviii.
 Major Pendennis' Club, chap. i.
 Major Pendennis—His Program of Life, chap. ix.
 Paternoster Row, chap. xxxi.
 Temple, *The Accommodations in the*, chap. xxix.
 Temple Garden, chap. xlix.
 Vauxhall, chap. xlvi.

The Virginians (1858-59). The story takes up the history of Henry Esmond's two grandsons and presents, in memoir form, their adventures in Virginia and in the London of Dr. Johnson, Garrick, Richardson, and other notable persons. The period covered is from 1756 to 1783.

- Bond Street, Vol. I, chap. xii.
 Cavendish Square, Vol. I, chap. xxxvi.
 Covent Garden, Vol. I, chap. xxxvi; Vol. II, chap. xix.
 Covent Garden Theatre, Vol. II, chap. xi.
 Cursitor Street Spousing-house, Vol. I, chap. xlvii.
 Drury Lane Theatre, Vol. II, chaps. xii, xxxii.
 Fleet Street, Vol. II, chap. i.
 Kensington, Vol. II, chap. viii.
 Kensington Palace, Vol. II, chap. x.
 Lambeth, Vol. II, chap. xxxii.
 Leicester Fields, Vol. I, chap. xxxvi.
 London, City of, Vol. I, chap. i; Vol. II, chap. xxi.
 Marylebone Gardens and Fields, Vol. I, chap. xxxvi.

- Montagu House (Don Saltero's Museum), Vol. I, chap. xxxvi; Vol. II, chap. xxii.
 Pall Mall, Vol. II, chap. xii.
 Ranelagh, Vol. II, chap. v.
 St. James's Palace, Vol. I, chap. xl.
 Vauxhall, Vol. I, chap. xl.
 White's Chocolate House, Vol. I, chaps. xl, xlv;
 Vol. II, chap. xii.
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- Dr. Johnson, Vol. I, chap. xxv; Vol. II, chaps. xii, xxxi.
 Richardson, Vol. I, chap. xxv.
 Lord Chesterfield, Vol. I, chap. xxv.
 Garrick, Vol. II, chaps. xii, xxxii.
 Reynolds, Vol. II, chap. xxxi.
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TROLLOPE, ANTHONY

The Way We Live Now (1875). A novel depicting many phases of English life, in which the contrasting characters are a ruined patrician family and a rascally millionaire. The book deals with character and incident rather than place.

- Bear Garden Club, chaps. iii, x.
 Bruton Street, chap. xiii.
 Covent Garden, chap. lxiv.
 Westminster Place, chap. lxiv.

The Prime Minister (1876). The story deals with the appointment of a prime minister, his commonplace career, his indirect influence in elections near his country seat, his wife's intriguing for the election of her favorites, and his resignation.

There are no references to places in London, but there is much about meetings of Parliament, bankruptcy bills, and county suffrage bills.

WARD, EDWARD

The London-Spy, Compleat in Eighteen Parts (1703).

This is a rich mine of material closely comparable to Dekker's *Gul's Horn-booke* and Pierce Egan's *Life in London*, and dealing like them with the man-about-town on his hunt for pleasure in all sorts of respectable and disreputable parts of town.

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